



Rae Spoon

Critics' discovery
of 2003



Billy Bragg

Critics' live act
of 2003

PENGUIN EGGS

Kate & Anna McGarrigle

Buck 65

David Francey

Kiran Ahluwalia

Féis Rois

Rob Currie

Kenny Butterill

The Swiftys

Métis Fiddlers

John Spiers & Jon Bowden

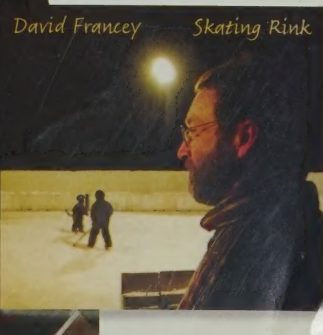
Warsaw Village Band

Dervish

Critics' choice
Album
of the
Year



Issue No. 21
Spring 2004



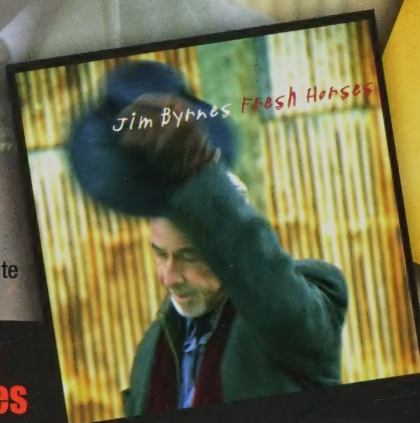
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musical centre..." — Vancouver Sun

"It's cross-breeding of soul and country,
which recalls Otis Redding or Percy Sledge..."
— Vancouver Province



JENNY WHITELEY Hopetown

"...one of the most talented young
singer-songwriters to recently burst onto
the scene." — Sing Out! Magazine

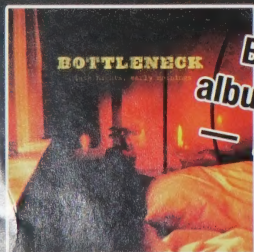
"Juno-winning country-bluegrass
singer Jenny Whiteley, from a venerable
Canadian folk-music family, combines those
sharp musical bonafides with no-nonsense
urban-chick attitude, like Alison Krauss in
a black leather jacket. Nice to see Toronto's
roots and indie faithful crossing paths once
in a while." — Carl Wilson, Globe & Mail



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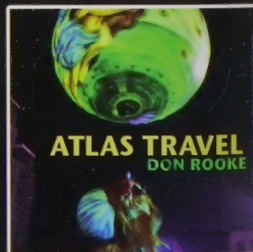
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Contemporary Jazz
Album of the Year

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- April 8**
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Hugh's Room
- April 14**
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- April 17**
Perth, Ontario
The Studio Theatre
- April 23**
Kingston, Ontario
Scherzo Pub
- April 25**
Wakefield, Quebec
The Black Sheep Inn
- May 8**
Toronto, Ontario
Isabel Bader Theatre
Victoria College, U of T
w/ JANE SIBERY and
WASHINGTON, SCARLET & WHITELEY

Cover story

24... The likes of Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris covered the songs of Kate and Anna McGarrigle. And Nick Cave and The Chieftains demanded collaborations. Nonetheless, these sisters have also recorded several truly memorable albums of their own including two in French. The latest *La Vache Qui Pleure* (*The Cow That Cries*) sees them reunited with lyricist Philippe Tatartcheff, who writes about lonely rural women who like mice, hates rats and scare little children.

Contents

- 05 . . . Editorial
- 06 . . . Charts
- 08 . . . News
- 11 . . . Passing through
- 13 . . . Dervish
- 15 . . . Rob Currie
- 16 . . . The Swiftys
- 19 . . . Féis Rois
- 21 . . . Warsaw Village Band
- 23 . . . John Spiers & Jon Boden
- 24 . . . Kenny Butterill
- 25 . . . Win Black Hen CDs
- 26 . . . Albums of the Year
- 42 . . . Recordings
- 60 . . . F.A.C. Newsletter
- 61 . . . Book Reviews
- 64 . . . Letters
- 66 . . . Subscribe

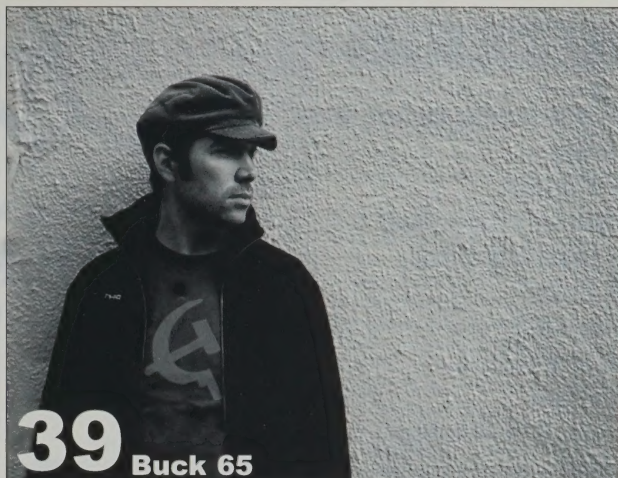
Quotable

"I knew all along I wasn't really cut out to be a carpenter. It wasn't my passion in life. I knew there was something else I should have been doing. Right after the first time I had played, which was in the basement of the Cliff House in Ayers Cliff, and it was packed to the rafters. I remember taking a walk that night and thinking, 'Ah that's what I'm here for. That's what I'm supposed to be doing'." — David Francey

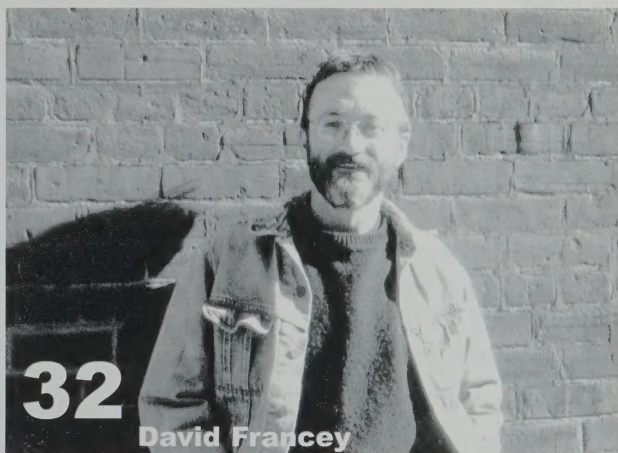
"After we did our first French record a lot of people said, 'His lyrics are really weird. Why don't you get somebody else to write something? Maybe you'll have hits.' But we like weird." — Kate on the McGarrigle's French lyricist Philippe Tatartcheff

Sheet Music

- 65 . . . Rape of Grand Pré —
By Rob Currie



39 Buck 65



32 David Francey



17 Métis Fiddlers



12 Kiran Ahluwalia

3
PENGUIN
Eggs
Spring
2004

Interviews

Features

Tubthumping

2004 – 25th Anniversary

David Byrne featuring the Tosca Strings
Earl Scruggs
Spirit of the West
Four Men and a Dog (Ireland)
Lucky Dube (South Africa)
Ani Di Franco
Fred Eaglesmith
Martin Simpson
Rachael Davis
Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez
Paperboys
Martyn Joseph
Garnet Rogers
Oh Susanna
Al Simmons
Bobby Cameron
Genticorum
Kaki King
Rodney Crowell (tentative Thursday)
Great Big Sea (Friday)
The Dixie Hummingbirds (Thursday)
Michael Franti & Spearhead
Natalie Merchant
Wanda Jackson
Linda Tillery and The C.H.C.
David Lindley
The Starwbs

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Canada's Folk, Roots
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articles or artwork. We publish four times a
year: Summer (June), Autumn (September),
Winter (December) and Spring (March).

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that all content is truthful, we cannot be held li-
able if found otherwise.

This magazine takes its name from Nic
Jones's wonderful *Penguin Eggs* — a collec-
tion of mainly traditional British folk songs
revitalized with extraordinary flair and inge-
nuity. Released in Britain in 1980, it has
grown into a source of inspiration for such
young, gifted performers as Kate Rusby and
Eliza Carthy. Nic, sadly, suffered horrific in-
juries in a car crash in 1982. He has never fully
recovered and now seldom performs. His
care and respect shown for the tradition and
prudence to recognize the merits of innova-
tion makes *Penguin Eggs* such an out-
rageously fine recording. This magazine strives
to reiterate that spirit. Nic Jones' *Penguin
Eggs* is available through Topic Records in
Europe and Shanachie in North America.

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and the Canada Council for the Arts.*



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for the Arts**



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editorial

I really can't tell you how elated I felt
writing the piece on Féis Rois for this issue.
What a brilliant concept — inspiring the
teaching of traditional music and providing
all the tools necessary for its enjoyment.

I grew up in the small town of Dingwall,
from which Féis Rois operates. Music les-
sons at school there were rudimentary at
best — triangles and tambourines the only
instruments available to students, but only
during lessons. Here in Edmonton, my
daughter learned the violin at my insis-
tence. She never really took to it, though.
Vivaldi never quite had the same impact as
Alanis Morissette. But she has since bought
a set of drums and nightly irritates the
neighbours. Brilliant.

Now, I fully understand the discipline and
benefits gained from practicing formal
pieces, but at the end of the day music is
largely for enjoyment. Arduous, boring
practice for no reward leads students to
drop music at the first opportunity. And
that's tragic.

Attending various concerts and folk clubs
over the winter, it really struck home how old
folk audiences have grown. Few teenagers at-
tend these events. To my knowledge, no high
school in all of Canada offers a syllabus that
includes traditional folk or roots music. The
result, clearly, grows more and more visible.
Bluntly put, interest in traditional music out-
side of the Maritimes appears on the verge of
extinction. And nobody seems to care.

No such predicament exists in the
Highlands of Scotland, thanks to the efforts
of the féisean movement. The Irish estab-
lished Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (The
Society of Irish Musicians) in 1951, for
very much the same reason. And closer to
home, The Cape Breton Fiddlers
Association brought the Island's great fid-
dling tradition back from the brink in the
early '70s with startling success.

It's time, then, to start a Canadian move-
ment to introduce future generations to the
singing and playing of traditional folk
songs and tunes in a fun, inspirational envi-
ronment. While a creeping disillusion has
set in around the exorbitantly expensive,
business-orientated North American Folk
Alliance, what better way for it to reinvig-
orate its sense of purpose than to invest some
of its considerable expertise at a very fun-
damental level: tuition for teenagers.

Me? I'm not going to hold my breath.
Inspiration through action, I say. So I've
borrowed my daughter's violin and began
learning jigs and reels and the slow airs of
Neil Gow that sometimes break my heart.
Life's not a rehearsal.

— By Roddy Campbell

5
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

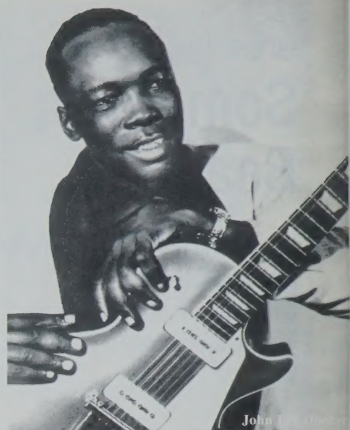
Editorial

a & b sounds top 20

Compiled from January sales in all a & b sounds' stores across Canada

1. Ani DiFranco
2. Jesse Cook
3. Lucinda Williams
4. Various Artists
5. Lhasa
6. Natalie MacMaster
7. The Be Good Tanyas
8. Eva Cassidy
9. John Lee Hooker
10. Lucinda Williams
11. Lhasa
12. Kathleen Edwards
13. Eva Cassidy
14. Various Artists
15. Ani DiFranco
16. Eva Cassidy
17. Ruthie Foster
18. Jimmy Rankin
19. Various Artists
20. Manu Chao

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Educated Guess | (Righteous Babe) |
| Normal | (Narada) |
| World Without Tears | (Lost Highway) |
| Beautiful | (Boreal/NorthBlis) |
| The Living Road | (Audiogramme) |
| Blueprint | (Rouder) |
| Chinatown | (Netwerk) |
| Songbird | (Blix Street) |
| Face To Face | (Eagle) |
| Sweet Old World | (Elektra) |
| La LiOrona | (Audiogramme) |
| Failor | (Rouder) |
| American Tune | (Blix Street) |
| Best of The Blues | (Columbia) |
| Evolve | (Righteous Babe) |
| Imagine | (Blix Street) |
| Runaway Soul | (Blue Corn) |
| Handmade | (EMI) |
| Live At The Yale | (Independent) |
| Radio Bemba Sound Sytem | (Virgin) |



John Lee Hooker

southside sound top 10

Compiled from January sales at Southside Sound, 10342 Whyte Ave, Edmonton, AB

1. The Swiftys
2. Lhasa
3. R.L. Burnside
4. Lucinda Williams
5. Johnny Cash
6. No Guff
7. Red Stick Ramblers
8. Kimmie Rhodes & Willie Nelson
9. Doug Sahm
10. Lucinda Williams

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| The Swiftys | (Independent) |
| The Living Road | (Audiogramme) |
| Sound Machine Grove | (HMC) |
| World Without Tears | (Lost Highway) |
| American Recordings IV | (American) |
| They're Red Hot | (Hoodoo) |
| Bring It All Down | (Memphis) |
| Picture In Frame | (SBD) |
| Return Of Wayne Douglas | (Texas Tomador) |
| World Without Tears | (Lost Highway) |



Lucinda Williams

moondance top 10

Compiled from December and January sales at Moondance, 425 George St. N., Peterborough, ON., K9H 3R4

1. Rick Fines Trio
2. Ruthie Foster
3. Blackie and the Rodeo Kings
4. Hary Manx & Kevin Breit
5. Various Artists
6. David Francey
7. Po' Girl
8. Martin Simpson
9. Bap Kennedy
10. Don Ross

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Riley Wants His Life Back | (RAF Music) |
| Runaway Soul | (Blue Corn) |
| Bark | (True North) |
| Jubilee | (NorthernBlues) |
| Beautiful | (Boreal/NorthBlis) |
| Skating Rink | (Laker Music) |
| Po' Girl | (Jericho Beach) |
| Righteousness and Humidity | (Red House) |
| Long Time A Comin' | (Calfish) |
| Robot Monster | (Narada) |



Rick Fines

galaxie top 12

The CBC's Galaxie Folk/Roots Channel's most-played, high-rotation Canadian album releases for December 2003 - January 2004

1. Matt Mays
2. Serge Monette
3. Ennis Sisters
4. Leslie Alexander
5. Oh Susanna
6. Miranda Stone
7. The Paperboys
8. Kate Maki
9. Aymar
10. Jim Bryson
11. Glengarry Boys
12. Finest Kind

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Matt Mays! | (Sonic) |
| 18 routes | (Independent) |
| Can't Be The Same | (Wame) |
| Savage Country | (Supercoops) |
| Oh Susanna | (Netwerk) |
| Seven Deadly Sins | (Earthdress) |
| Dilapidated Beauty | (True North) |
| Confusion Unlimited | (Independent) |
| Aymar | (Bernadette) |
| The North Side Benches | (Orange) |
| Roots | (Independent) |
| Silks And Spices | (Fallen Angle) |



Jim Bryson

galliard top 10

1. Kate Rusby
2. Iran Lovasz & Teargass
3. Gerardo Nuñez et al
4. June Tabor
5. Chris Thile
6. Bhattacharya & Brozman
7. Chris Norman Ensemble
8. Bryan Sutton
9. Musica Antiqua
10. The Amestoy Trio

Compiled from December and January sales at Galliard Music, 101 - 3 Fan Tan Alley, Victoria, BC, V8W 3G9

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Underneath The Stars | (Compass) |
| Wide Is The Danube | (C&C) |
| The New School of Flamenco | (The Act) |
| Echo Of Hooves | (Topic) |
| All Who Wander Are Not Lost | (Sugarhill) |
| Mahima | (Riverboat) |
| The Caledonian Flute | (Boxwood) |
| Bluegrass Guitar | (Sugarhill) |
| Jardin de Al-Andalus | (Pneuma) |
| Le Fil | (Daqui) |

rose top 10

1. Natalie MacMaster
2. Jesse Cook
3. Undertakin' Daddies
4. David Francey
5. David Francey
6. David Francey
7. Various Artists
8. Kim Barlow
9. Van Morrison
10. Eva Cassidy

Compiled from December and January sales at Rose Music, 4137A 4th Avenue, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 1H8

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Blueprint | (Rounder) |
| Normal | (Narada) |
| Devil In The Rearview | (Caribou) |
| Skating Rink | (Laker Music) |
| Far End Of Summer | (Laker Music) |
| Torn Screen Door | (Laker Music) |
| Beautiful | (Borealis/NorthernBl) |
| Gingerbread | (Caribou) |
| What's Wrong...? | (Blue Note) |
| American Tune | (Blix Street) |

music top 10

1. Mae Moore & Lester Quitau
2. Various Artists
3. Natalie MacMaster
4. Lhasa
5. Uneven Hill
6. Ray Bonneville
7. Kate & Anna McGarrigle
8. Ron Sexsmith
9. David Francey
10. Hary Manx & Kevin Breit

Compiled from December and January sales at Music, 263 Huron Rd., Sebringville, ON, N0K 1X0

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Oh My! | (Festival) |
| Beautiful | (Borealis/NorthernBl) |
| Blueprint | (Rounder) |
| The Living Road | (Audiogramme) |
| Lori Cullen | (Independent) |
| Rough Luck | (Stonely) |
| La Vache Que Pleure | (Tribe) |
| Rarities | (Ronboy) |
| Skating Rink | (Laker Music) |
| Jubilee | (NorthernBlues) |

highlife top 10

1. Lhasa
2. Michael Franti & Spearhead
3. Hi-Fidelity Dub
4. Rufus Wainwright
5. Verve Remixed
6. Abyssinia Infinite
7. Terry Hall & Mushtaq
8. Al Green
9. Caexico
10. The Be Good Tanyas

Compiled from December and January sales at Highlife Records, 1317 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3X5

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| The Living Road | (Audiogramme) |
| Everyone Deserves Music | (BooBoo Wax) |
| Sessions - Chapter S | (Guidance) |
| Want One | (Dreamworks) |
| Il | (Verve) |
| Zion Roots | (Network) |
| The Hour Of Two Lights | (Honest John's) |
| I Can't Stop | (Blue Note) |
| Feast Of Wire | (Quarterstick) |
| Chinatown | (Network) |

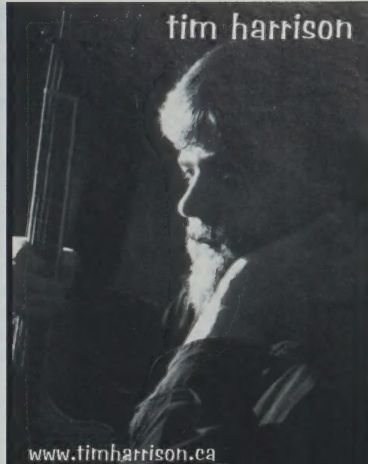
frank's music top 10

1. Various Artists
2. Cesaria Evera
3. John Prine
4. Guy Davis
5. Manu Chao
6. Alison Krauss & Union Station
7. Delbert McClinton
8. Eva Cassidy
9. Rhonda Vincent
10. Enya

Compiled from January sales at Frank's Music, Champlain Place, Dieppe, N.B. E1A 4X5

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| Songs of the Louvin Brothers | (Universal) |
| Anthologie | (BMG) |
| Anthology: Great Days | (Rhino) |
| Cholate To The Bone | (Festival) |
| Esperanza | (Virgin) |
| Live | (Rounder) |
| Live | (Sony) |
| American Tune | (Blix Street) |
| One Step Ahead | (Rounder) |
| Day Without Rain | (Warner) |

tim harrison



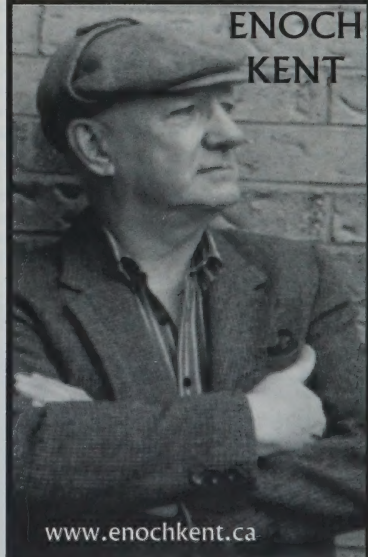
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While Canada has no similar program, Canadians took an active role in the recent BBC Radio Scotland's Young Traditional Musician Award. **Warren Robinson**, of Goderich Celtic Roots Festival, helped judge the event at the Celtic Connections festival in Glasgow in January. It was won by 23-year-old Gaelic singer **James Graham** from Lochinver. Graham was one of six finalists for the award, which was created to encourage young musicians to preserve their tradition and inspire a career in traditional music. He will appear this summer at the Winnipeg, Vancouver and Mission folk festivals as part of his prize, which also includes the creation of a CD with Edinburgh-based Foot Stompin' Records. His travel to Canada will be supported by the British Council. This trans-continental project was spearheaded by **Simon Thoumire** and **Dugg Simpson** of the Vancouver Folk Music Festival. Simon, who won the BBC Radio 2 Young Tradition Award in 1989, was a driving force in creating the Scottish Young Tradition Award in 2001 and the first winner, **Gillian Frame**, appeared at the festival in Vancouver that summer. The winner of next year's award will appear at Goderich Celtic Roots Festival and others in Ontario. No word to date whether Robinson, Thoumire and Simpson will launch a similar Young Traditional Musician Award program in Canada.

★ ★ ★

Digging Through the CBC Vaults – a recent initiative by the CBC unearths classic moments of Canadian musical history on the CBC Archives website www.cbc.ca/archives. Featured in the 'Arts' section, is a profile of **Gordon Lightfoot**, with loads of rare performances, including the CBC-commissioned 'Canadian Railroad Trilogy'... and a surreal clip of **Anne Murray** and a be-gloved

Bob Dylan inducting **Lightfoot** into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame (1986). There are also profiles of **Leonard Cohen**, **Joni Mitchell** and a look at the role of CanCon regulations (with **Bryan Adams** prominently concerned). Best part? It's free.

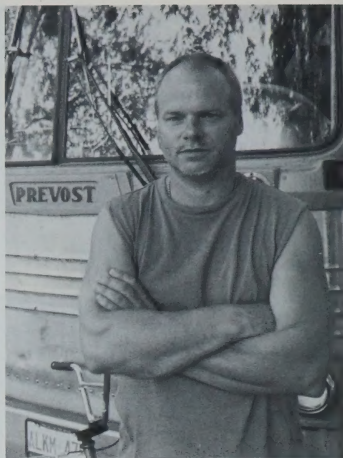
★ ★ ★

The First Annual **Fred Eaglesmith Texas** Weekend takes place March 11-14, New Braunfels, Texas. Southern Ontario's finest will be backed by **The Smokin' Losers** and **The Flathead Noodlers!** Other performers include **The Laws**, **Chip Taylor** and **Carrie Rodriguez**, **The Waybacks**, **The South Austin Jug Band**, **Billy Joe Shaver**, **J.T. Van Zandt** and **Kimmie Rhodes**. New Braunfels lies in the hill country between Austin and San Antonio. For more information: www.fredeaglesmithtexasweekend.com.

★ ★ ★

Two new folk festivals will debut this summer in British Columbia. The Prince George Folkfest will be held on the beautiful campus of the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George, BC, August 13 - 14. It will be held in conjunction with the university's 10th convocation. Some of the confirmed artists include **Blue Rodeo**, **Martyn Joseph**, **Solas**, **Karen Savoca** and **Pete Heitzman**, **Sonny Rhodes**, **The Lee Boys**, **Ox**, **The Invincibles** and **The Wyrd Sisters**. Incidentally, The Wyrd Sisters release their fifth recording, *Wholly*, late spring or early summer, featuring newest member, Calgary's **Lindsay Jane**. Tickets for Prince George will be on sale the end of March through Ticketmaster. For further information contact Artistic Director Jo Beattie, Prince George Folkfest, 1665 Edmonton Street, Prince George, BC V2M 1X5. Or check the festival's website at www.pgfolkfest.com

Pemberton, BC, will hold its first annual folk festival in the village's Pioneer Park June 12 - 13. The festival will offer 20-plus acts of traditional, world music and West Coast songwriters on three stages. The event will have a family focus – no alcohol will be sold at the event. Confirmed performers include: **The Mike Weterings Band**, **Los Canasteros**, **Big Root**, **Rose Ranger**, **Leanne Lamour**, **Terry**



Fred Eaglesmith: Texas Festival

Anderson, and **Mandido**. The full line up will be available in March. For more information contact: **Richard Doucet** at 604-894-5904

★ ★ ★

Ladyfest Calgary, a multi-disciplinary arts festival, slated for early June, is looking for submissions from female musicians. Interested parties can contact **Robyn McNeil** at ladyfestcalgary@hotmail.com

★ ★ ★

Manitoba Hal has taken over as Artistic Director of The Trout Forest Music Festival in Ear Falls, Ontario. The 2004 Trout Forest Music Festival will be held August 13th, 14th and 15th and will feature **Colin Linden**, **Rita Chiarelli**, **Ken Hamm**, **Tim Williams**, **Ian Tamblyn**, **Burnt** and more. Interested musicians are asked to contact Hal at hrolund@troutfest.com. Details on the festival can be found at www.troutfest.com. Hal and **The Incombustible Men** have just released a new CD *Lou Ow* – a collection of blues, jazz, hawaiian and rockabilly. The Incombustible Men will appear at The Great Canadian Ukulele Festival, Portage La Prairie, MB May 8, 2004.

★ ★ ★

Mike Reynolds has been elected Artistic Director of the Peterborough Folk Festival – a duty previously carried out by committee. **Yvonne Guerin** will now head the festival's Publicity and Promotions. Performers interested in the festival should contact mike.reynolds@sympatico.ca

★ ★ ★

The Ontario Council of Folk festivals (OCFF) is now accepting showcase applications for its 2004 Conference in Guelph, Oct. 14-17. A showcase performance at the OCFF conference provides an opportunity for artists to crack the Ontario festival circuit – the largest regional festival touring circuit in North America. The submission deadline is May 15, 2004. Selected artists will be notified by the end of July 2004.

Application forms are available online at <http://www.ocff.ca/showcase.htm> or by calling the





Rick Fielding: new recording

OCFF office at 1-866-292-6233. Entries can be mailed to: Ontario Council of Folk Festivals, 410 Bank Street, Suite 225, Ottawa, ON K2P 1Y8.

The OCFF is also looking for nominations for its Estelle Klein Award, which recognizes Ontario residents who have made a significant contribution to the province's folk music community. Suggestions can be made through an online form available at www.ocff.ca. The nomination deadline is April 15, 2004. The award will be presented at the conference in October.

★ ★ ★

The Mariposa Folk Festival in Orillia, ON, will again hold auditions for its Showcase Stage. The auditions will be held Saturday May 1 and Saturday May 8, 2004, at the Eady Hall in Medonte Township – about 90 minutes north of Toronto near Mt. St. Louis Ski Resort. Those selected will receive a nominal fee to perform at the festival, which runs July 9, 10 and 11. Promo packs should be sent to showcase coordinator, David MacMillan, 309 Medonte Road 2, RR#2, Coldwater, ON, L0K 1E0.

★ ★ ★

Ken Whiteley recently released *Gospel Music Makes Me Feel Alright!* on Borealis Records. Recorded live last spring at Hugh's Room in Toronto, Whiteley was joined by **Jackie Richardson**, **Colin Linden**, **Ginny Hawker**, **David Wall**, **Melisa Devost**, bassist **George Koller** and multi-instrumentalist brother, **Chris Whiteley**.

Michael Jerome Browne has put the finishing touches to his new Borealis recording, *Browne's Hoedown!* It features **Michael Ball** on fiddle, **Jodi Benjamin** vocals and triangle, **Jordon Officer** on guitar and lap steel, **Stephen Barry** on bass and guest vocals from **Penny Lang**.

Rick Fielding completed a new recording with **Paul Mills** at the dials and switches. The new album contains both original and traditional material. Fielding is joined by the likes of **Tony Trishka**, **Oliver Schroer**, **Don Reed**, **Grit Laskin**, **Chris Coole** and **Paul (Curly Boy Stubbs) Mills**.

Further upcoming Borealis releases include **Evalyn Parry's** *Unreasonable* and discs from **James Gordon**, **Mike Stevens & Raymond McLain**, **Christina Smith & Jean Hewson**, **Terry Tufts**, **Beyond The Pale** and **The Bill Hilly Band**.

★ ★ ★

das macht SHOW launch their latest disc *Four Legs Good* in their hometown, April 14th, at Brandon University, MB. They will also perform at Winnipeg's West End Cultural Centre April 15th. *Four Legs Good* follows their debut *One Night In Berlin*, which earned a Prairie Music Award nomination in 2002.

★ ★ ★

Winnipeg's **James Keelaghan**, has won the USA Songwriting Competition, folk category, for the second year in a row. His song *Message To The Future* took first prize. Recorded on Keelaghan's fifth solo album, *Road*, it was released in Canada on Jericho Beach Music and in the US on Hightone Records. Keelaghan's award includes a number of prestigious showcasing opportunities such as the North American Folk Alliance and SXSW, airplay on the nationally syndicated US radio program, *Acoustic Café*, and approximately \$2000 in cash and prizes. He won the same competition last year with his *Cold Missouri Waters*.

Peterborough's **Rick Fines** took first Place in the Blues Category of the International Songwriting Competition for his song *Riley Wants His Life Back*. He will receive \$1000 US and \$2000 US worth of merchandise (including an Epiphone AJ-18S acoustic guitar). "I am thrilled just to know that BB King – as one of the judges – listened to my song!" says Fines.

And Toronto's **Peter Verity** was a runner up in the folk category in the 2003 **John Lennon** North American Songwriting Contest for his song *North Ontario*.

★ ★ ★

Finest Kind's 2003 release, *Silks & Spices* has been nominated in the best Folk/World album category of the Contemporary A Cappella

Recording Awards, confusingly (for Canadians) known as CARAs. *Painful Plough*, from the album, was nominated as best Folk/World song. For more info visit www.finestkind.ca

★ ★ ★

Mike Regensterief's Folk Roots/Folk Branches, is celebrating its 10th anniversary on air at CKUT (90.3 FM) in Montreal. It's the only broadly-defined, folk-oriented program on any Montreal radio station. Regular broadcasts began Thursday February 3, 1994. Folk Roots/Folk Branches is heard on Thursday mornings from 9:00-11:30 (EST). Regensterief also writes frequently about folk music for Sing Out! magazine and for the Montreal Gazette.

★ ★ ★

Alberta singer-songwriter **Tom Wilson** has launched a weekly folk and roots program, *The Rosebud Radio Hour*. The show, recorded in the tiny rural hamlet of Rosebud, Alberta, pop. 95, runs Saturdays at 5:00 PM on Calgary's AM 1060 CK-MX. Media packages, including discs can be sent to: Rosebud Radio Hour, c/o Rosebud School of the Arts 654, Rosebud, AB, T0J 2T0. Wilson has also opened *The Rosebud Café*, which will feature live music. It's a pleasant hour's drive northeast of Calgary.

★ ★ ★

In August 2002, **Steve Goldberger's**, recording studio, *The Shed*, was severely damaged by a fire. Located in historic Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, *The Shed* is now fully rebuilt and specializing in acoustic performances.

★ ★ ★

Nominations for the 2004 Juno Awards were released in February. Categories and nominees pertinent to this magazine include Roots and Traditional Album of the Year, Group: **Blackie & The Rodeo Kings**, **BARK**; **La Bottine Souriante**, *J'ai jamais tant ri*; **The Creaking Tree String**



das macht SHOW: out and about in Manitoba

Quartet, *The Creaking Tree String Quartet*; Pierre Schryer Band, *Blue Drag*; Le Vent du Nord, *Maudite Moisson*.

Roots and Traditional Album of the Year, Solo: **Bruce Cockburn, *You've Never Seen Everything*; Susan Crowe, *Book Of Days*; David Francey, *Skating Rink*; Natalie MacMaster, *Blueprint*; Oh Susanna, *Oh Susanna*.**

World Music Album of the Year: **Kiran Ahluwalia, *Beyond Boundaries*; Jesse Cook, *Nomad*; Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, *Sweet Return*; Intakto, *Intakto*; Lhasa, *The Living Road*.**

Blues Album of the Year: **Ray Bonneville, *Roll It Down*; Morgan Davis, *Painkiller*; David Gogo, *Live At Deer***

Lake; Harrison Kennedy, *Sweet Taste*; Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee*.

Aboriginal Album of the Year: **Susan Aglukark, *Big Feeling*; Burnt, *Burnt Project 1*, *The Avenue*; Eagle & Hawk, *Mother Earth*; Sandy Scofield, *Ketwam*; Whitefish Jrs., *In Honour Of Percy Drevier*.**

★ ★ ★

Nova Scotia-based **Morgan Davis** led all winners with four awards at the seventh annual Blues Awards held in Toronto in January. Davis won the Recording of the Year, Male Vocalist of the Year, and Songwriter of the Year for his disc *Painkiller*. He also shared Producer of the Year with **Alec Fraser**.

Toronto's **Jack de Keyser** took three categories – Entertainer of the Year, Electric Act of the Year and Guitarist of the Year. Vancouver Island's **Harry Manx** earned the Acoustic Act of the Year

Kitchener's **Mel Brown** was awarded with the Blues with a Feeling Award for his lifetime contribution to blues music. And **Elaine Bomberry** was the recipient of the Blues Booster of the Year for her outstanding contributions to the blues industry.

★ ★ ★

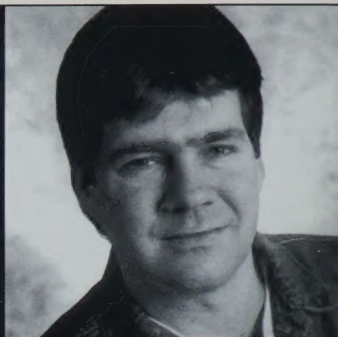


Rokia Traore: fRoots Album of the Year

I am a d.j.; I am what I play

Folk Routes is now in its tenth year. While each program shares the latest releases, keeps up with news and the concert scene, all are a little different – a diverse mix that draws on all genres of music that traces both the routes and roots of folk – from the jazz of Joni to the rock of Seeger and on to the blues of Zimmerman. “It’s a program,” says Tom, “shaped from its diversity not its limitations.” Guests, that frequently drop in, include David Francey, Steve Earle, Fairport Convention, June Tabor, Dick Gaughan, Kevin Welch and Kieran Kane, Niamh Parsons, Dervish and The Bill Hilly Band.

Tom Coxworth has been involved with the music scene for over twenty-five years – as a volunteer, writer, producer, manager, agent, and his favourite role as host of Folk Routes. “Stop by for the fastest two hours in roots music,” says he, “seating is unlimited.”



Folk Routes hosted by Tom Coxworth
CKUA Radio, Sunday 4 - 6 pm (MST) available
nation-wide at <http://www.ckua.com>

American National Public Radio program Theme and Variations is set to release a *Best Of...* CD that will feature *Jack & Charmian* (the story of Jack London and his wife during the San Francisco earthquake) from **Doug McArthur & Jeffra**'s disc *Angels of the Mission Trail* - a CD of original songs based on California history. McArthur is currently the Artistic Director of Ontario's Eaglewood Folk Festival.

★ ★ ★

Winners of 2004 Grammy Awards included: Best Traditional Blues Album: **Buddy Guy, *Blues Singer***. Best Contemporary Blues Album: **Etta James, *Let's Roll***. Best Traditional Folk Album: **June Carter Cash, *Wildwood Flower***. Best Contemporary Folk Album: **Warren Zevon, *The Wind***. Best Native American Music Album: **Black Eagle, *Flying Free***. Best Traditional World Music Album: **The Monks Of Sherab Ling Monastery, *Sacred Tibetan Chant***. Best Contemporary World Music Album: **Cesaria Evora, *Voz D'Amor***.

★ ★ ★

On January 22, The Bottom Line, one of the best-known folk, roots, blues and jazz venues in the world, closed its doors. For nearly 30 years The Bottom Line presented such exciting and innovative artists as **Miles Davis, Ry Cooder, Bruce Springsteen, Sleepy John Estes, Leonard Cohen** – to West 4th and Mercer in New York City. Springsteen was one of many who offered financial support to the club, which had fallen behind on rent payments to its landlord, New York University, totaling \$185,000. Discussions between the 400 capacity club and the university ended when NYU asked for more than \$1 million in renovations and a rent increase of more than 200 percent.

★ ★ ★

Mali's **Rokia Traore** won fRoots magazine's annual Critics Poll, Album of the Year, for her disc *Bowmboi*. The complete Top-10 includes: 2. **John Spiers & Jon Boden, *Below***; 3. **Oi Va Voi, *Laughter Through Tears***; 4. **Abyssinia Infinite, *Zion Roots*** (Outcaste); 5. **Kékélé, *Congo Life***; 6. **Terry Hall & Mushtaq, *The Hour Of Two Lights***;

7. **Manecas Costa, *Paraíso Di Gumbé***; **Jim Moray, *Sweet England***; **Radio Tarifa, *Fiebre***; **Martin Simpson, *Righteousness & Humidity***; **June Tabor, *An Echo Of Hooves***.

★ ★ ★

Sidmouth, England, celebrates its 50th anniversary July 30 - August 6. Confirmed performers to date include **Kate Rusby & John McCusker, Ralph McTell, Danú, Chris Smither, The Watsons, Tony Benn & Roy Bailey** – BBC Radio Two's Best Live Folk Act in 2003.

Pioneering ceilidh band, **Tiger Moth**, will reform for the event. Other dance bands include **Oyster Ceilidh Band (Oysterband)** with special guests, **BELLOWhead** – the **Spiers and Boden** big band. For information on tickets, campsites and accommodation contact the Festival Office, PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU. Box Office: 01629 827010. Or info@sidmouthfestival.com

★ ★ ★

Oysterband recently celebrated 25 years as a band at London's Forum. Former members **Ian Kearey** and **Chris Taylor**, performed with the current lineup as did pals **Chumbawamba** and **June Tabor**.

Between March and May frontman **John Jones** will be touring with his first side venture since the original inception of the Oyster Ceilidh Band in 1979. He will be touring in an acoustic trio with **Benji Kirkpatrick (Big Session)** on guitar, bouzouki and vocals and **Seth Lakeman (Equation, Cara Dillon)** on fiddle, tenor guitar and vocals.

★ ★ ★

Phillip Chevron, formerly of the **Pogues**, has written the music for a new production of **Brendan Behan's The Quare Fellow**. The play, directed by **Kathy Burke**, opens at the Liverpool Playhouse in mid-February before touring to Oldham, Glasgow, Bury St. Edmunds and Oxford. Its final performances at the Tricycle in London take place from mid-April to early May.



Bernie Jaffe: 1945 - 2004

Ontario, fiddler and tutor Bernie Jaffe died of cancer January 2, 2004. He was 58, writes Roddy Campbell. Born in Glen Wild, NY, in the Catskill Mountains, December 15, 1945, Jaffe came to Canada in 1967. As a talented guitar picker and fiddler, he played in such Toronto bluegrass bands as **Foxglove** and the **King City Slickers** – the latter with **Russell deCarle** and **Keith Glass**, who went on to form **Prairie Oyster**. Amongst others, Jaffe also played with **Bill Garrett** and singer-songwriter **Nancy Simmonds**, and recorded with **Stan Rogers** in 1976 on his celebrated debut LP, *Fogarty's Cove*.

A year later Jaffe and his partner, **Faun Bank**, moved to Tamworth, ON, to build their dream home. There, they settled and had three sons, **Luke**, **Leigh** and **Max**. In Tamworth, Bernie furnished Stone Mills Studio, where he taught fiddle, guitar and mandolin and sometimes recorded his students. He also repaired instruments and wrote fiddle tunes with noted Nova Scotian fiddler, **Gordon Stobbe**.

"Bernie's passion for the fiddle never wavered in the 30 years I knew him," says Stobbe. "Faun and his sons Luke, Leigh and Max lost a partner and father; those of us in Bernie's musical community lost a mentor, musical soul-mate and friend."

Recently Jaffe had worked on a disc of jazz standards with Ontario guitarist **Rick St. Jean**. It will now be completed by Keith Glass and released late in the Spring.

"He was a fabulous musician," says Glass. "He was much loved."

Jaffe was diagnosed with cancer in mid-November and died early in the New Year due to complications that arose around his heart.

There has been a foundation set up, in his name to provide on going support for young musicians. Donations can be made by sending a cheque to the Bernie Jaffe Music Bursary, RR#1, Tamworth, Ontario, K0K3G0. There will also be an annual music event setup to help finance the foundation and celebrate Bernie. Deatials are forthcoming.

Walt Grealis: 1929 - 2003

Walt Grealis, founder and publisher of Canadian music trade magazine RPM, died January 20 in Toronto, following a lengthy battle with cancer, writes Roddy Campbell. He was 74. A former policeman, Grealis worked as the Ontario promotion manager for London Records before launching RPM in 1964. That same year, he also established the Gold Leaf Awards, which eventually evolved into the Junos – Canada's equivalent of the Grammys. In 1975, Grealis also started the Big Country Awards, a forerunner of the current Canadian Country Music Awards (CCMAs).

Through RPM, Grealis successfully lobbied the federal government for Canadian content quotas on national radio, which began in 1971 and still remain in effect. The publication also introduced the MAPL (Music, Artist, Production, Lyric) logo that is used today to signify Canadian content on recordings.

Grealis received a people's award at the 1976 Junos, and in 1993, he was made an Officer of the

Order of Canada. RPM closed down in 2000.

Johnny Cunningham: 1957 - 2003

The Scots musician, composer and record producer, Johnny Cunningham died of a heart attack on 15 December in New York, writes Ken Hunt.

Born 27 August 27 1957 in Edinburgh, Scotland, he was part of the wave of folk bands in the 1970s and 1980s that included the **Battlefield Band**, the **Tannahill Weavers** and **Ossian**. Cunningham played fiddle with **Silly Wizard**, the band that had probably the most impact of them all, certainly on an international level. Later he became a prominent member of groups such as **Relativity** (with the **Bothy Band's** **Micheál Ó Dhomhnaill** and **Triona Ní Dhomhnaill** and his younger brother **Phil Cunningham**), the Boston, Massachusetts-based rock band **Raindogs**, **Nightnoise**, and the **Celtic Fiddle Festival**, the last of which deservedly earned the 'Celtic' in its name since it also boasted the Irishman **Kevin Burke** and the Breton **Christian Lemaître**.

Cunningham was still at school when, in 1972, he joined **Gordon Jones** and **Bob Thomas** in **Silly Wizard's** second line-up. Johnny Cunningham supplied the fiddle during their breakthrough years and North America suited him so much that, in 1981, he upped sticks and moved to the States. Over the next decades he worked in a bewildering number of combinations and combos. He made solo albums such as *Thoughts From Another World* (1981) and *Fair Warning* (1984), worked with his brother as a duo or with **Micheál Ó Dhomhnaill** and **Triona Ní Dhomhnaill** in **Relativity**, and in a whole variety of other combinations.

He also produced albums for **Cherish The Ladies** and **Solas**. The way I would prefer to remember him would be for his musical contribution – music, lyrics and instrumentation – for the Broadway production of Peter Pan called **Peter & Wendy** on the original cast album of the same name (1997). For him to die at 46 with what should have been 'a whole career' before him was a shock.

Rubén González: 1919 - 2003

Eighty-four-year-old year Afro-Cuban All Stars and Buena Vista Social Club's pianist Rubén González died in the Cuban capital on 8 December 2003. Born in Santa Clara in April 1919, mega-success came late in González's life, but when it did he made up for lost time. Between 1997 and 2002 he tasted international success on a scale seldom experienced in the quiet backwaters that are 'File under Folk' or '... World Music'. Like his fellow **Buena Vista Social Club** compadre **Compay Segundo** (1907-2003) (see PE 19), he was kicking back when he was approached to join the Afro-Cuban All Stars. He had not played a piano in three years; he didn't even own one.

González, a gifted and promising boy-musician, had studied piano at the Cienfuegos Conservatoire, graduating at the age of 15. In 1941 he moved to Havana with its thriving music scene, temporarily settled in Panama, before returning to Cuba to work with **Los Hermanos Castro**. Later González found work with **Enrique Jorin's** band

and even took over leadership of the band when Jorin died. With the ending of the boom years, the US boycott biting hard, and opportunities to play outside Cuba drying up, the music hit hard times.

In 1996 things had got really rough for González, but a Cuban musician **Juan De Marcos González** coaxed a bunch of the old geezers out of semi-retirement or, in Rubén González's case, real retirement. With the backing of **Ry Cooder** and the all-important financial underwriting of **Nick Gold** of the London-based World Circuit label, the younger González's dream came true. The prospect of playing again pleased González enormously and he threw himself into the *A Toda Cuba le Gusta* sessions. As come-backs go, it was extraordinary. In one interview Cooder, who also took part, came up with a delicious tribute: "He is the greatest piano soloist I have ever heard in my life. A cross between **Thelonius Monk** and **Fritz the Cat**." González and the vocalist **Ibrahim Ferrer** made such a good impression that they immediately got shanghaied to work on a second project, being recorded back-to-back in the Havana studio. This became the *Buena Vista Social Club*.

Those records, the exposure of **Wim Wenders'** Buena Vista Social Club film (1999), and further two solo albums – *Introducing Rubén González* (1997) and *Chanchullo* (2000) – gave him all the financial security he craved and he became a wealthy man. Apart from his melodically deft, rhythmically muscular piano playing and his place in the World Music record books, the abiding memory of him remains his beaming face at the end of a concert.

Dr. Hukwe Zawose: 1938-2003

On 30 December 2003, Tanzania's best known singer, ilimba and izizee player, Dr. Hukwe Zawose, died at home in Bagamoyo, at the age of 65, writes Ken Hunt. Tanzanian music never had much of an international profile outside of ethnography before Zawose. Born in 1938 in Dodoma, a rural district in central Tanganyika, as it was then known, he had an active recording career outside his homeland, recording for Real World, the Tokyo-based Seven Seas/King Record Co, Triple Earth (the London-based label that brokered his international breakthrough) and WOMAD Select (notably the *Mkuki Wa Rocho (A Spear To The Soul)* album, 2002). That same year he made *Assembly* – a collaboration with Canada's **Michael Brook** – and he and his nephew **Charles Zawose** supported **Peter Gabriel** on his 'Growing Up Tour'. Their collaboration *Animal Nation* appeared on the soundtrack for The Wild Thornberrys movie.



Kiran Ahluwalia

Poetry In Motion

Kiran Ahluwalia sings dreamily sensual songs inspired by centuries-old Persian love poetry known as *ghazals*. *Beyond Boundaries*, her latest recording, stretches that tradition with the inclusion of instruments from Afghanistan and contemporary lyrics from *The Caravan of Punjabi Pens*. Tony Montague polishes his Hindi.

One of the quirkiest aspects of writing about music from exotic parts of the world is that you pick up a vocabulary of evocative words in languages you don't normally speak. Thanks to Ontario musician

I've recently learned that *koka* is Punjabi for a nose ring, and *swarmandal* is Hindi for a type of small harp. More significantly, I now know that *ghazal*, — the name given to the South Asian genre of love-poetry-in-song that's become Ahluwalia's speciality — is an Arabic term meaning, talking to or about women.

Ahluwalia introduced the *ghazal* to many Canadian listeners four years ago with her debut recording *Kashish*. Its meticulously-crafted arrangements and, above all, her gorgeous, sweet and yearning vocals were rewarded with immediate critical acclaim and a Juno nomination. Last fall Ahluwalia released a superb follow-up, confirming her place in the upper echelons of North America's world music artists.

Comprising languorous *ghazals* and a couple of brisker-paced Punjabi folk

songs, *Beyond Boundaries* has a similar sound to its predecessor. Nonetheless, there are significant differences between the two albums. A greater proportion of the lyrics on the new CD are contemporary and Ahluwalia figures much more prominently as composer.

"I wrote the music for a couple of the pieces on *Kashish*, but was really just finding my feet with them," says the singer, on the line from her Toronto home. "For *Beyond Boundaries* I felt more confident about my abilities, and it has six of my own compositions. Having performed *ghazals* for so many years it seems a natural progression to be writing melodies for them, although it was never part of my original intentions."

Born in Bihar, in the northwest Indian state of Punjab, Ahluwalia first heard *ghazals* performed by her parents and their friends at social gatherings. "And I remember listening to *ghazals* on reel-to-reel tapes my parents constantly played, as well as on the radio. When I was somewhere between seven and nine years old I started singing myself at the gatherings."

Soon afterwards the family moved to Toronto. Although the opportunities in Canada to sing *ghazals* in public were far fewer, Ahluwalia's love of the genre never diminished. She took private classes in Indian classical music and dance all the way through her years at school and university. Graduating with a degree in Industrial Relations, Ahluwalia subsequently worked for a while as a bond trader on the Toronto Stock Exchange — but her heart was elsewhere. In 1990 she returned to India for a year to concentrate full-time on her mu-

sic. And over the next decade Ahluwalia alternated between working in North America and studying in India.

"I needed some serious training in Indian classical vocal music, because 95 percent of it is improvisation, and in order to sing *ghazals* the way I wanted to I needed to learn the art of improvisation in the Indian raga system. There aren't many *ghazal* teachers left, so, essentially, you get a classical training and then you have to find your own way in the *ghazal* world."

In 1996 Ahluwalia at last found her musical guru, Vithal Rao — a revered *ghazal* singer and teacher in the central Indian city of Hyderabad, who was formerly a court musician for the nizam [king] of Hyderabad. Every year since then, Ahluwalia has studied with Rao for two to four months — to drink from the source.

"He's about 70 years old now, but when you hear his voice it sounds so young. He's a true virtuoso — singing so many notes in a short time, and gliding smoothly through them. He's also a brilliant composer. Students who go to him have to be at a certain level, because he's not going to do much hand-holding. You have to take the pro-active stance of figuring out what he's doing when he performs *ghazals*."

Rao is one of the leading practitioners of a genre of music that first emerged in Persia around the 10th century, and reached the Indian sub-continent some four centuries later. Prior to 1950, according to Ahluwalia, *ghazals* were chiefly accompanied in India by the bowed and fretless *sarangi* — which is notoriously difficult to play. In recent decades the louder and much simpler harmonium (a close relative of the accordion) has increasingly come to take its place. However, both instruments are featured on Ahluwalia's albums, along with tabla percussion, guitar, and bass. The richer sound of *Beyond Boundaries* also includes *swarmandal*, *dhol* (a two-headed drum), flute, and *rubab* — a short-necked, plucked lute with three main strings.

One of the album's most beautiful tracks is the dreamily sensual *Bechain* (*Restless Meditation*), for which Ahluwalia wrote both the melody and the cryptic words, translated as: "You are not alone in your restlessness./We are all in darkness." The song features the close interweaving of her voice and the *rubab*, considered the national instrument of Afghanistan.

"The inspiration for *Bechain* was a guest I invited to play on the album. Shamsudeen Masroori is a wonderful Afghan musician who's recently come to Canada. He played on *Main Dhoonta Hoon* (*Eternal Search*) and it worked out so well that I felt couldn't have him for just one song.

"I remembered that when I was about 17 I'd written these simple lines, and I made up a melody for them. I knew the notes and the scale would work well for his instrument, and the tradition he comes from."

Traditionally the same person does not write both the words and the music for a *ghazal* — indeed, Ahluwalia reveals that the two artists don't normally share a close or direct relationship. In her case, however, she's been able to forge links with

at least three of the poets whose work she's set to music on *Beyond Boundaries*.

"Some time ago I discovered that there were many different organizations of South Asian writers in Canada, one of which is called, in translation, Caravan of Punjabi Pens. I went to a meeting of theirs in Toronto where about 40-45 poets read from their own works, a number of which were *ghazals*. The writing was of a very high quality, and I decided I wanted to use some of it for the new album."

On *Beyond Boundaries*, Ahluwalia includes one *ghazal* each from Tahira Masood, who's a homemaker and mother, Rafi Raza, who's an electrical engineer, and Rasheed Nadeem, who works by day as a taxi-driver.

"It's really exciting to have found these poets, and to know that the genre is evolving right here, not in any diffused aspect but in a wonderfully evolved way. Sometimes when I do concerts in Toronto I invite the poets to recite their verses. Even people who don't understand the words tell me it's a great experience to see and hear them read by their authors, as well as to hear what I'm doing in terms of setting their works to music."

The spirit of those collaborations suggested the title for the new album.

"It has two meanings. One is that the music is evolving beyond the boundaries of where it originated. The other is that the people who have worked on this recording have been able to meet there, beyond the boundaries of their birth places. The lyricists that I happen to work with are all born in Pakistan. If I was living in India I wouldn't have been able to make contact with them."

Also the fact that I was able to invite an Afghani musician to play, which again would be very difficult if we were living in Asia. So there's the aspect of the coming together of the creativity of people from places where it would have been very hard to communicate. It could only happen somewhere as open as Canada."



Spirit Guide

They own a pub because of the craic on tap. They are about to make a movie – a traditional Irish version of The Commitments. Oh yes, and Dervish just released a new album, Spirit – full of beautiful songs and hard-driving jigs and reels played on the odd Indian and Arabic instrument. Yer starter for ten, Tony Montague.

If you overhear an Irishman extolling the qualities of 'the crack', don't be alarmed. He's referring to nothing more illicit than a peculiarly Celtic recipe for merriment – good company, great music, and lashings of porter.

For more than a decade Dervish has purveyed some of the finest crack (or *craic* in Gaelic) known anywhere to fans of traditional Irish music. And five years ago several band members decided to set up a regular supply for their own inspiration, taking out a lease on a pub in their hometown of Sligo, in the northwest of Ireland. Now the *craic* is available to them almost literally on tap.

"The place is called Furey's Sheila-na-Gig, named after some stone carvings found on ancient buildings," says Dervish's leader, mandolinist and bouzouki-player Brian McDonagh, on the line from Sligo. "It's great to have somewhere you can bring your friends, sit them down, treat them well, and have a few tunes with them. Although it only fits 80-90 people we've also had some tremendous little concerts in there with artists like Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, Andy Irvine, and Dick Gaughan."

Dervish has a long association with Sligo pubs and high quality *craic*. It was in Stone the Crows, another establishment, that McDonagh, accordionist Shane Mitchell, flautist Liam Kelly, and bouzouki player Michael Holmes met twice a week in the late '80s to lead traditional music sessions. "We'd just play with whoever came along," McDonagh recalls. "Then we were approached by a guy, a local shopkeeper, who wanted an album of

tunes he could sell to tourists. We got together and recorded it over one weekend. A name was needed, and we came up with Dervish. That's how it all started."

Reaction in music circles to *The Boys of Sligo* was overwhelmingly positive. Dervish started playing concerts around the country, and within a couple of years recruited County Roscommon singer Cathy Jordan. Her beautifully-nuanced voice and strong stage presence booted the band straight to the forefront of Irish music. Following the success of its first two albums *Harmony Hill* (1993) and *Playing With Fire* (1995), Dervish began touring regularly in Europe and North America. The musicians have become roving ambassadors for their country and its culture, performing in such places as Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo, Bogota, Rio de Janeiro (before a festival audience of a quarter of a million), and on the Great Wall of China.

The essential Dervish formula is a classic one, first developed by the great bands of the '70s – Planxty, the Bothy Band, and De Danann. Hard-driving sets of tunes, mainly jigs and reels, alternate with traditional songs in Gaelic and English that cover a broad emotional range. The acoustic arrangements are sophisticated and meticulously crafted, and the musicianship is always impeccable. Since becoming a septet in 1998 with the addition of fiddler Tom Morrow and guitarist and harmonica player Séamus O'Dowd, Dervish has featured an unusually varied palette of instrumental colours.

McDonagh is excited about the band's latest album *Spirit*, which marks a departure in a number of respects from its predecessors. Whereas previously, the musicians rented premises in Dublin for intensive recording sessions, this time they set up their own studio in Sligo.

"It meant you could now go in and try things out, rather than need to have everything clear in your head beforehand. I wanted to give people the freedom to be more creative, to push ourselves a bit further."

The most striking instance of the new musical approach is on the final track *Whelans*. The well-known jig is provided with a syncopated beat, and an arrangement that brings together bass, Indian sitar, Arabic qanoun, and O'Dowd's searing electric guitar.

"It was a bit of fun more than anything else, a spur of the moment thing. We had a very rough shape in mind, and just went for it. Afterwards we added loops and different instruments. You can hear the tune at the beginning and end, and in the middle it goes through a kind of metamorphosis. It's certainly divided the sheep from the lambs – people either hate it or love it."

Another new development is the appearance on *Spirit* of four songs of contemporary vintage. Brendan Graham, a friend of the band, contributes both the plaintive *The Fair-Haired Boy* and (as bonus track) an even more haunting untitled and unaccompanied elegy, written in Gaelic for long-time Dervish sound-man Finn Corrigan who died while the album was in the making. Ewan

13
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

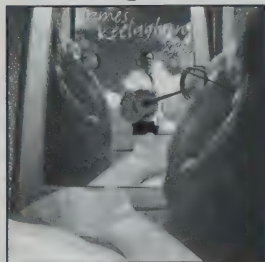
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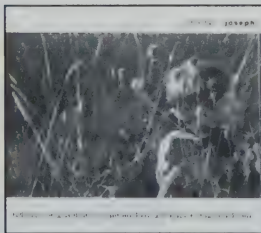
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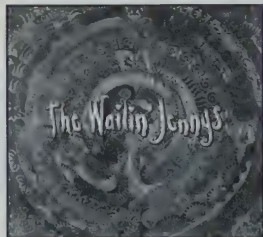
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McColl's *The Lag's Song*, a prison ballad sung by O'Dowd, is followed by a superb rendition of Bob Dylan's *Boots of Spanish Leather*, delivered in an achingly tender and lyrical style by Jordan.

"Sometimes I think traditional music can start to be a bit academic—and we were probably as guilty of it as anybody else. There's nothing we enjoy more than sitting down to play with some of the older musicians around, and learning from them—the singers too. But the tradition has never been stagnant, it's required that new songs are written. It's great to hear a tune composed last week that for all the world sounds as if it could be hundreds of years old. We've a lot of respect for the tradition, but we're not slaves to it. The next album will probably be similar to *Spirit*, but we'll push a bit further again."

Forthcoming activities include working on an intriguing project that, according to McDonagh, Dervish has been talking about for the past seven or eight years: a full length feature film based on the band.

"It all seems to be coming to a head now. The film would be something like a traditional-Irish version of *The Commitments*, in which we have various adventures and romances. Pure fiction and a bit of fun. The story basically is of Dervish touring in America. Our fiddle player ends up not being able to play, so we have to get in this other fiddler who turns out to be a klezmer musician. So it's about the meeting of these two styles and how they fit together. We've got to do the music for it. But we won't be doing any of the acting. Other people are going to be acting us—God help them!"



All in the Family

Initially inspired by his grandfather, former Cornerboys frontman, Rob Currie's debut, This Gentlest Country, draws deep from his roots in the Miramichi area of northern New Brunswick. Currie keeps the flame lit for the rich historical music of this region, reckons Sandy MacDonald.

Rob Currie has a singular call to fame in east coast music.

"I put myself through law school by singing at the Split Crow," laughs the Halifax folk singer and assistant professor at Dalhousie Law School.

While most university students were drinking away their loans at the popular Halifax folk club, Currie was singing onstage as part of the pub quartet The Cornerboys, a group inspired by the Clancy Brothers and Ryan's Fancy.

These days most of his stage work is on the lectern in front of young law students, but the New Brunswick native still finds time to occasionally perform in the downtown Halifax pub circuit. With his robust voice, a scholarly love for the traditional music of Atlantic Canada and a fine gift for songwriting, Currie, 34, keeps the flame lit for the rich historical music of this region.

Recently, he released his first solo album, *This Gentlest Country*, a 13-song collection of contemporary folk tunes. He writes about the glorious shipbuilding era in Saint John, N. B.; the tragic



Rob Currie

forced exodus of the Acadian people (written over the old Irish melody *Skibbereen*); and of the immigration of the Scots people to the New World.

Currie's own roots go deep in the Miramichi area of northern New Brunswick. He traces his music to his grandfather, a renowned local singer and multi-instrumentalist.

"He played everything and was an amazing tenor singer."

His grandfather often recorded himself on his home reel-to-reel tape machine. A few years ago, Currie transferred those hours of analog tapes to a CD, which became a best seller in the area.

"Implicitly I knew making music was something I could actually do. I knew there was human side to making music, just by going to my grandparent's house."

He found an outlet for that muse while attending university in Antigonish, N.S. often pairing up with Larry Foley, who would later start Newfoundland folk-pop band, The Punters.

"Larry and I were both getting our feet wet playing traditional music." One brought the traditional Irish-based music from Newfoundland, while the other the Scots-rich music of New Brunswick.

"Some of our tunes were good, some were pretty bad. But we were learning the trade."

His music accompanied him first to Ottawa, where he played the Irish bars and polished his stage show while in graduate school. A summer spent in London, England in the early '90s really opened his eyes to the possibilities of folk-based music.

"That summer was like someone had thrown water on me. I saw new ways to approach music." Bands like The Hothouse Flowers and the Waterboys were melding trad Celtic music with mystic pop, and the sound enchanted Currie.

"That's when my music really began to jell. There was something magic happening."

By the time he returned to Halifax in '93, the city

was bustling with an exciting musical energy. The pop scene was grabbing international attention, as punky-pop bands Sloan, jale and Thrush Hermit shook up the downtown bars.

But there was another blossoming going on, as a handful of bands were refining Celtic pop music. Great Big Sea was regularly coming to play the Halifax pubs, the Barra MacNeils and the Rankins were exploring new Celtic voicings and Currie had his own band plowing up that same fertile field.

"We were the new generation," says Currie, who was reframing the trad music and energizing it for the younger crowds. As The Cornerboys, (inspired by the Clancy Brothers and Ryan's Fancy), they toured through the Maritimes, ripping up campuses and pubs. They even committed the ultimate folk sacrifice by performing a rap version of Stan Rogers' *Barrett's Privateers*.

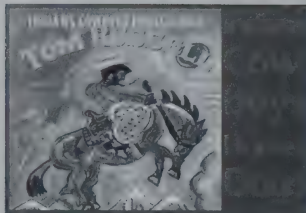
"That earned us more infamy. People hated it, and the hate mail poured in."

But like Halifax's famous beer, those who liked it, like it a lot. And The Cornerboys worked as much as they wanted—in demand as much for their boisterous live show as their music.

"I seem to have spent my life jumping in front of a crowd. I'd dance on the bar. Anything for a laugh, anything for a reaction."

While Great Big Sea slid their music into the pop realm, Currie turned back and wanted to dig further into the folk traditions of the region. By 1995, he was enrolled in Dalhousie Law School, and working every week in the pubs. Inevitably, the Cornerboys had to slow down, as Currie's daytime commitments became more demanding. Still, he performed with different sidemen, pulled together from the pub circuit, grabbing a fiddler and guitarist to perform his original tunes.

Finally, he decided to record some of his contemporary folk tunes for *This Gentlest Country*. Many of the tunes were written over the past ten years. So what took so long to finally record that



Tom Russell *Indians Cowboys Horses Dogs*

A rousing and edgy look at the Old West by one of America's most respected singer/songwriters.

Includes five new Tom Russell originals, plus Marty Robbins' "El Paso," Johnny Cash's "The Ballad of Ira Hayes," and Woody Guthrie's "East Texas Red." Featuring Joe Ely and Eliza Gilkyson on a masterful & epic nine & a half minute version of Dylan's "Lily, Rosemary and The Jack of Hearts"

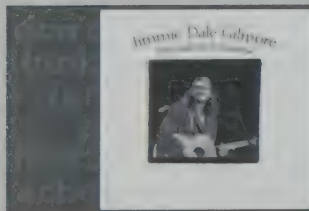
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solo album?

"Time and money. When I had the time, I didn't have the money. And when I could get the money, I just couldn't find the time."

Currie juggled the time constraints by recording the songs over several months, grabbing studio time with producer Kevin Evans when their schedules allowed. Evans, half of the popular Evans and Doherty duo, has a compact home studio that fit the bill for Currie. And the pair shared a love for the same music — Andy M. Stewart, Christy Moore and the other important contemporary Celtic folk singers.

They brought in the cream of the Halifax players to help out on the sessions, including fiddlers Richard Wood, Martin St-Maurice, Anthony Rissessco and Dave MacIsaac, keyboardist Lisa MacDougall, uilleann piper Jon Goodman and multi-instrumentalist Darren McMullen. The playing is superb on this disc, full of moody atmospheres that frame the songs.

"This isn't a mainstream album. But I was ambitious for this project. It has a Maritime feel, but I wanted to push beyond that, to tell the stories in a way that was dignified and resounded with the people and places where the songs came from."

Fast Times...

Shawn Jonasson has an old voice, like Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard or even George Jones. Jonasson's band, reckons Fish Griwkowsky, is so schticklessly anomalous that his act seems like a novelty.

"Swiftly" Jonasson shows up at the Sidetrack at the edge of last call, catching just the final four numbers of a spectacular rock band called the Twin Fangs. There is a feeling in the air that this famous venue is finally escaping the stigma of stale, '80s neon memories and frantic cougarism, though this tension-release is possibly explained by the fact that we are now getting old enough to

feel comfortable here. Age doesn't really matter, though, as old people will always tell you, but Jonasson is one of those farm cats who put his life on the highway young, anyway, driving away from Dauphin, Manitoba, for good at 18. Inadvertently lucky at times, he's beyond many of us in accomplishment, despite his overall demeanor of riding a barrel downstream to see where it takes him.

At 28, he's released a truly fantastic country record with his band, the Swiftys, on keyboards been the freshest appendage sewn onto the eternally enduring Old Reliable, was just (for real) voted sexiest musician in one of local entertainment weeklies and, let us not forget, had a daughter in the midst of being known as one of the fiercest drunks in Edmonton.

"Yeah, I've toned it down," he says, like everything, matter-of-factly. "I was toning it down gradually throughout the pregnancy... not even consciously."

The shrug of qualification at the end may seem strange to some of you, but it's an accidental hold-over from being young and part of this community in the '90s. For a very long time, for a great many of us, caring about stuff was uncool. Well, caring about uncool stuff, anyway, like families and making a living.

But Swiftly (whose real name is Shawn) does care about things; you can hear it in his voice on the country record. When he sings about broken hearts and VLT addiction, it sounds like he's sitting in the back of an RCMP van shivering, wrapped in a wet blanket after falling through black ice. He's starting to get one of those OLD voices, like Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard or even George Jones. There is desperation on the album which taps into country, real country, as opposed to the thousand variants that range in quality from "hot country" to "alt.country" which I could sadly write a curse-laden book about. Swiftly and I both laugh at the fact that what he's doing, playing in a straight country act obsessed with neither tight shirts nor screeching metal pedals, is so schtick-



The Swiftys

lessly anomalous that *his* act seems like the novelty in the current climate.

"I guess it's been ten years or more since alt country took hold – I mean, that's the standard title now for anything good, right? From the reviews I've read online of the Swiftys, it's like, 'I don't know if these guys will be able to make it in the alt country realm; they're too traditional.'"

Which is just fine by Jonasson.

"Alt country doesn't seem to be fading. If anything, there are more and more alt country bands every day, especially in Edmonton. They just keep crawling out of the woodwork. At some point, I guess, everything will go back to just being called country, and hopefully the bad, commercial country will disappear. Shania can go over to techno pop, I wouldn't miss her."

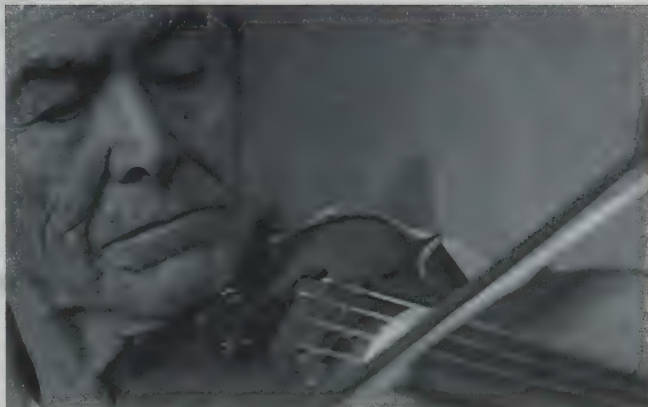
The last thing I want to do here is get into a lecture on the various fractal nomenclatures of country music. Suffice it to say that both mainstream radio country (the overall sales numbers of which have been dropping through the floor like heavy ghosts) and the edgier, post-punk country that so many of our finest local kid rockers have retired into in their mid 30s, are both generally evolving towards the middle ground, towards tradition. The radio garbage is taking on more slide, fiddle and arguably too much bluegrass, but actually finally taking some chances. While various underground stars who play the garage form are searching for hits and chasing radio play in small towns.

Taber, Alberta's Corb Lund is a perfect example of this, having both outgrown his indie rock days and taken his clever band into unprecedented places, including several popular whistle stops at Big Valley Jamboree in Camrose, and indeed directly onto CFCW and CISN, both dedicated Edmonton country stations with wide reach and a lot to say about eating beef in the name of pride. Lund, of course, also dominates the Albertan college charts. In other words, total penetration. For many bands, alarm bells went off. This thing can work.

Swiftly ponders both his and Corb's future. "I think he'll probably take that one extra step into the mainstream, and good for him. I like guys like Charlie Major, actually. I thought I liked Vince Gill, too, but he'll do the sappiest ballad and wreck everything. I like guys that ride the line between mainstream and indie. Buddy Miller's the epitome of that. I saw him at the Blues and Roots festival in Calgary and he blew me away."

But this summer seems to be the best chance for Swiftly to start blowing people away himself. The band is playing the Edmonton Folk Festival, the Winnipeg Folk Festival, main stage at Dauphin's music festival and the shrooiny North Country Fair. It's going to be a busy time for the new dad.

"It's been pretty cool the way things have happened," he smiles. "The album came out, I didn't really know what to expect. I just put it out to get a recording of my songs, but suddenly I got good reviews all over the country, and we charted at No. 7 on CKUA for 2003. I've even gotten a bit of play on AM radio in some small towns, in my home town. It's been going upward and I guess I really want to market to AM radio this year, see what happens. I think



Grandy Fagnan

people in the rural communities especially will latch on, and I'm not getting any younger," he laughs.

But what Jonasson maybe doesn't understand is that as he gets older and beaten down, his music will inevitably reflect this in appealing ways, as is the mandate of good country: to turn forlorn suffering into beauty. Right now is really just the beginning.

Time Passages

The re-release of Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Western Manitoba provides a wonderful insight into a unique but almost lost tradition. The intrepid Patrick Langston sheds some light on a musical heritage that has become an increasing source of Métis cultural pride.

Were it not for Anne Lederman, a wonderful chunk of Canadian musical history might have gone missing. In 1984, Lederman, at the time a student of Ethnomusicology at York University and researcher for the National Museum of Canada, happened upon a tape of Grandy Fagnan, a then-82-year-old Métis fiddler from the village of Camperville in western Manitoba. Lederman recognized some of the tunes, but Grandy's interpretation was unlike anything she'd ever heard, full of chords, double stops and asymmetric phrasing. An aggressive player, he accompanied himself with vigorous clogging.

Grandy, Lederman quickly discovered, was no anomaly, but rather one of many Native and Métis fiddlers along the western shores of Lake Manitoba who were carrying on a unique musical tradition born of the previous century's meeting of European fur traders and native Americans. The 'old' repertoire favoured by Grandy and his fellow fiddlers typically blended French-Canadian, Scottish and other roots with the phrasing and structure, and especially the heavy beats, of traditional First Nations music.

"These forms were utterly unpredictable," says Lederman, herself a fiddler of note. "I thought at first, 'Is he (Grandy) just improvising? Is he just one guy with some crazy style?' I had no idea whether there was a whole culture behind this or

not. That cried out to me to investigate."

By 1986, Lederman had amassed hundreds of tunes, completed a master's thesis on the subject and released a four-record vinyl set of representative music from six western Manitoba communities.

That vinyl set is now available as a two-CD collection, *Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Western Manitoba*, on the Falcon label. Mostly jigs and reels, some as short as 34 seconds, the longest over seven minutes, the 96 tracks include numerous original tunes as well as covers of such standards as *Turkey in the Straw* and *Bonaparte's Retreat*. The new collection includes a 48-page booklet on the historical background, repertoire, style, players and tunes.

When Lederman, government funding in hand, set out to assemble her musical archive, she had to leap a cultural divide. "The first things they'd play would be Don Messer tunes or *Orange Blossom Special*. I'd say, 'No, no, I want to hear the things you grew up with,' and they'd say, 'Really?'"

Seems that many of the musicians had been disqualified at fiddle contests, even when they played well-known numbers. Explains Lederman: "It's that quirky thing of phrases where you can't tell when they're going to end or when the tune's going to start over, and that bothers people who are raised on a 32-bar standard. When you hear something close to your own culture but a little bit different, that's when the territorial argument comes up: 'This is right, but that's wrong.'"

Lederman finally cracked the ice by recording four tunes by then-70-year-old Emile Spence from the community of Eddystone. "Within two days, everyone knew there was this girl from Toronto wanting fiddlers," she recalls, and most folks jumped happily on board."

Some of the tunes were recorded in fiddler's homes with the clatter of family life as accompaniment. Other tracks were cut in band offices. Still others Lederman culled from amateur tapes, and sometimes tapes of tapes, made at house parties in the 1960s, where no one was about to quiet down just because a clunky reel-to-reel was whirring away in the corner.

18

PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Tubthumping

The quality of many tracks falls short of the pristine quality we've grown accustomed to, but that's irrelevant. What counts is the character of the music and the musicians. That's present in spades.

So when Grandy, partially deaf when the recordings were made, wanders off-key, you just grin and wait for him to settle down. He does, slipping into the remarkable musical introductions and tag endings that, inherited from First Nations music, earmark native and Métis fiddling.

The music on these CDs was passed on by ear. In an explanation common to most of the performers, Eldon Campbell says, "I had uncles who played fiddle and the accordion, so I learned mostly from them." (Eldon contributes five tunes including *Broom Dance*, which is the Scottish *Keel Row*).

Born in 1945, Eldon has lived his life in Kinosota, population 100. "There's not much left here, except a few ranches and retired people," he says. "The nearest store is 12 miles away. We still have bingo and dart tournaments. I work out at a fishing lodge in the summertime and then I'm just home for the winters."

Although they've now been replaced by community hall dances, Eldon remembers house par-

ties fondly. "There was lots of dancing and there were three or four good fiddlers in our community." The entertainment included plenty of the old repertoire: "It's made for dancing. It's got a definite rhythm."

Indeed, many of the tunes on these CDs are named for dances: *G Reel*, *C Reel*, *D Reel*, all performed by Willie Mousseau, a formidable clogger who taught many younger fiddlers to play; *D Jig* and *G Two-Step* by Walter Flett, one of three fiddling brothers; *D Waltz*, a tune known in Quebec as *Valse St. Pierre* and played here by Hyacinth McKay.

Willie Mousseau, Walter Flett and Hyacinth McKay, like most of the fiddlers on these two CDs, are dead. Grandy Fagnan passed away just about the time Lederman was completing her field work. Jimmy Anderson, at the time of writing the oldest living player on the collection, is ailing.

But the old repertoire, a reflection of growing Métis pride in their own heritage, still surfaces. Eldon, who plays in a country band, will sandwich a couple of old-timers in between more standard fare at community dances.

The music also gets occasional airings on NCI-FM, Manitoba's Aboriginal radio network, alongside more contemporary programming.

"It's important for people to recognize that culture isn't static," says Lederman. "Canada was built on a mix of cultures, and this is the first example of cultures mixing. Our whole country was



Hyacinth McKay

built from those hybrids."

Or, as Eldon Campbell concludes, "There's no wrong way of playing, it's just people playing differently. It's just the Métis style."



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Ani diFranco

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The Living Tradition

The Highland-based féisean movement has inspired unparalleled interest in traditional Scottish music and Gaelic song. Children and adults alike have taken up fiddles, accordions, whistles and clarsachs under the guidance of numerous noted tutors. Over a nice cup of tea, Roddy Campbell gets to the roots of this unique cultural renaissance.

Many a revolution began in a public library. Karl Marx's association with the reading room in the British museum being largely the main catalyst.

That magnificent London building bares no resemblance to the small library in the heart of the Highland town of Dingwall. Nonetheless, in this sedate sandstone building developed the hub of a movement that has revolutionised involvement in traditional Scottish music and culture.

Until recently, it housed *Féis Rois*. *Féis*, pronounced 'faysh', is Scots Gaelic for festival. *Rois* means Ross, as in Ross and Cromarty, the shire in which Dingwall is the main town. And while *Féis Rois* has moved to new digs since my visit last autumn, it continues to inspire both young and old to take up fiddles, accordions, bagpipes, whistles, guitars, clarsachs – the small Scottish harp – and the Gaelic language and its songs.

The *féisean* movement has spread throughout Scotland, and, thanks to funding from the Scottish Executive's Cultural Strategy, *Féis Rois* successfully introduced a national education program – its advances marked with countless coloured pins on a large map on Rita Hunter's office wall. The affable Hunter manages *Féis Rois* and over a nice cup of tea she explained how this extraordinary grassroots phenomenon operates.

First, though, a clarification or two. A *féis* does not fit the North American concept of a festival. It is not about booking celebrities and having an audience paying for the privilege of hearing them perform. Neither is it similar to the Kiwanis model, where music students compete against their peers for prizes. Rather, a *féis* is a week of tuition – absolute beginners to advanced – that culminates in all participants performing in concert.



Members of *Féis Rois* on the Ceilidh Trail

The instructors include some of the finest traditional musicians in Scotland – the likes of Donald Shaw (Capercaillie), Angus Grant (Shooglenifty), Phil Cunningham (Silly Wizard) and Cathal McConnell (The Boys of the Lough).

"They love it," says Rita. "They all are very aware of the importance, and I think they all feel it's a privilege to give something back. But it's terrific fun. It's very hard work. You learn a lot."

"The way the tutors approach it, they don't bring three days work, they bring a year's tuition. They give enough for you to go away and work on your own. You'll be able to advance your technique. You'll get massive new tunes. Language, everyone learns a [Gaelic] song. But you take a lot away with you. So it's to inspire as well as to teach."

The first *féis* actually began in 1981 on the tiny Hebridean island of Barra (pop. 1,316). A local doctor and priest grew concerned that few of the Island's inhabitants passed on their native language to their children. So they organised a two-week festival with ceilidhs and tuition in Gaelic, singing, and various instruments. The whole community pitched in and made it a success. And word gradually spread to the mainland.

Féis Rois started in 1986. Its first festival took place in the beautiful West Highland fishing village of Ullapool. That event was organised to accommodate elementary to high school students, ages nine to seventeen. Fifty participants took part. Then with funding from the local district council, *Féis Rois* hired a small staff which provided encouragement, stability and direction. Enrollment at its events quickly surpassed two hundred. But success created its own problems.

"It wasn't safe. You couldn't operate with that amount of children in a small village. We couldn't cope with it and we wanted to have high quality classes. Quality is so important to us. So we separated junior and senior and started a teenagers *Féis*."

Parents soon demanded equally opportunities and an adult *Féis* was organised in 1991. Of the parents that showed up that first year, several clearly had more reservations than others.

"We had to drag people out of their kitchens and put them in our cars, saying, 'You will love it, honestly. You must come', says Rita. "Some were coming and pretending they were going to church, or going shopping. Twenty-seven adults showed up that first year. They had a great time. And they

had the most amazing quality of tutors. We are now looking at 265 [adults attending]. People come from America to the adult *Féis*, New Zealand, Australia, France, England, Northern Ireland and Ireland."

Further developments at *Féis Rois* include the development of a music bank, from which students rent instruments and invitations to schools all over Scotland to participate in its programs. On the whole, little traditional music is taught within the education system. Certain staff do, however, provide more than others. And it is this inconsistency the *féisean* movement has attempted to correct by making regular after-school tuition available on a regular basis in many regions of the country.

Of course, all this activity has paid huge dividends. Interest in the clarsach had all but died out twenty years ago. Now it's thriving again. A typical ten-year-old, Lucie Macintosh, took it up a year ago and receives frequent instruction from possibly the most prominent clarsach player in all of Scotland, Allison Kinnaird.

"I just liked the look of it," says Lucie, who followed her older sisters Aimee (whistle) and Kerri (pipes) to *Féis Rois*. "I like it a lot. It's cool." Her younger brother Jamie plays the pipes. And does Ms. Macintosh have a favourite piece of music she prefers to play? "The *Skyboat Song*, because it's easy." Right.

Interest in Gaelic has also passed all expectations. "We have started to see a fantastic flowering," says Rita. "It took a few years. One thing we certainly noticed within our own *féis*, participants that came at [age] eight or nine, who had absolutely no Gaelic in their family, went on to learn fluency. A number of our participants have gone on to university to study Gaelic, Celtic studies and Scottish studies. So we are definitely seeing this result, which everyone is very, very pleased about."

While there are few negatives involved in the *Féis Rois* program, girls do tend to outnumber boys by a ratio of two to one in almost all age groups. Girls seem to join in groups, whereas boys tend to be more shy. There is also a significant drop off rate between primary (elementary) and secondary (junior high) school. Too many conflicting interests, says Rita.

"We concentrate very much on vibrant teenage programs. It's a very important stage for them. I



Jamie and Lucie Macintosh

19

PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

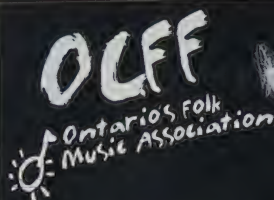
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"...a potent blues cocktail reminiscent of John Lee Hooker and JJ Cale, leavened with Clapton and Dire Straits styled guitar work."
— Folk Roots Magazine

Stony Plain Recording artist, Ray Bonneville weathered story-telling vocals, intricate but understated harmonica playing and highly percussive electric guitar have become familiar to roots audiences world-wide.

find it's crucial. They are the ones that are going to carry it forward."

And how. *Féis Rois* now puts together young bands and finds them gigs in hotels and pubs throughout the summer. Not only that, they help pay part of their fees. The venue pays the remainder, plus accommodation. The circuits they have created, 'Ceilidh Trails', are aimed at stimulating tourism in the Highlands.

"It helps everyone. But for the young people, it's the best of circumstances to be paid to play music and to sing and learn. We pay them because you have to get the commitment. . . Now you are in serious danger of coming to Ross and Cromarty and hearing traditional music on your holidays."



Mazovia Magic

Poland's Warsaw Village Band describe their music as 'bio-techno'. "It's the rhythm of our hearts," says violinist Wojtek Krzak. It also brilliantly combines dance culture and Jamaican dub with 'white singing,' - a kind of melodic shout derived from shepherds' calls. Chris Nickson takes notes.

Musical traditions are reinvented all the time. It's the way they grow and develop. But there seems to be a global Zeitgeist happening, as all around the world a new generation rediscovers its roots and mixes them with more current sounds.

That idea is very apparent in Poland's Warsaw Village Band. They have plenty of respect for tradition, but bring to it the ideas and energy of the youth - hardly surprising, since the oldest member is just 25. The results are displayed on their international debut, *People's Spring*, a record so impressive it just garnered them Best Newcomers in the latest BBC Radio 3 World Music Awards.

Poland has been a country in transition for two decades, slowly making its way from the Communist past to the capitalist present. Along the way it's been shedding some of its history, but the seven-piece group is intent on keeping the old music - which has gained very little global exposure - alive.

"The band is a radical return to sources in search of musical inspirations and immemorial virtues," explains violinist Wojtek Krzak. "It's also an exploration of folklore and archaic sounds. It's also fun, joy and spontaneity. The most important for us are emotions connected with old Polish music, wildness and the truth which comes from the roots. We started to play old Polish instruments. Our passion is traveling to small villages and visiting old musicians who show us their tradition, technique of playing. The most important for us is music from Mazovia area, the heart of Poland. There we can find very archaic music, which is our favorite style."

Formed in 1997, they quickly hit the studio, produced by Włodzimierz Kleszcza, who'd made a name for himself by working with producer Adrian Sherwood on the groundbreaking collaborations between reggae Twinkle Brothers and the traditional Polish family band Trebunie Tutkie. *Hopsasa Classic Polo* was definitely a formative effort (notable not only for its folk melodies, but also for

Stara Baba, a wonderful deconstruction of *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*). By 2000, most of the original members had departed, and they "started with quite a new crew except Maciej the drum player and Maja the cello."

People's Spring builds on the foundation laid by *Hopsasa Classic Polo*, but takes it several steps further. The influence of dance culture and Jamaican dub is quite apparent in the use of studio effects (Krzak himself is a big reggae fan). *On To You Kasjonia*, for example, voices and trumpets ride waves of echo without ever losing the sense that this is folk music.

That feeling is enhanced by the 'white singing,' a kind of melodic shout derived from shepherds' calls, and the use of the suka and fidel ploacka, both old Polish instruments. White sing, Krzak explains, is "a unique technique of singing in Polish villages. It's like wild shouting. Singing on scream. It's typical for Mazovia area music."

The instruments "come from the Middle Ages. The technique of playing is like an Indian Sarangi. You play on it sitting down on a chair, you have it on your elbow. You play on it by nail technique, not fingers. You press the strings by your nails not fingers. It's typical for baroque music, but the primitive models were used in the Polish villages."

While most of the band discovered Polish folk (which is hardly well known in its native country) at music school, Krzak learned the old-fashioned way, from a traditional musician. To all of them the tradition speaks loudly of real emotions, "love, passion, sadness. These emotions are timeless. Traditional music is free, we can find there lots of wild energy, passion. These are what we like the most. We can find there rhythms like in punk-rock music, rock riffs and many other styles. The problem is how to discover it. The most important is carefully listening to old tunes."

The Mazovia tradition, in particular, has a very dark trance-like quality, which gives it a contemporary edge - a kind of acoustic techno; indeed, the Warsaw Village Band call their music 'bio-techno,' a very apt term for something that's both organic in its acoustic sound, but also driving and hypnotic.

"Trance is very important for Mazovia area Polish music," Krzak agrees. "You can hear the dances which could be very long, based on a very simply rhythms played on the drum, violin and 'basy' (kind of traditional cello). Techno it's nothing new, we know it from the ages, but we forgotten about it. Bio- because it's very naturally for human nature, Bio- because it's played on wooden acoustics instruments. Bio- because it's the rhythm of our hearts."

Ancient trance plays easily into its modern counterpart on the two remixes that close *People's Spring*. *I Had A Lover* adds beats and loops, but never loses its brooding heart; instead it becomes a shadowy, fitful piece. *At My Mother's*, on the other hand, reaches out to India, forming a connection that might sound odd, but works quite naturally.

"Well, every style of music comes from India," notes Krzak, "because our civilization comes from that areas, but there is no special influences between Polish music and Indian. Mazovia music is rather free from Gypsies influences. You can hear such influences on the south of Poland in the mountains. Mazovia music is a very special style, you can hear there rather Jewish music influences than Gypsies."

A product of the dance and sampling age, he finds it perfectly natural to include remixes. After all, he says, they're "just in a modern style. It's a sign that we live in a global village."

This band's village is the place where two worlds - the archaic and the modern - come together exquisitely. They're proud to offer an alternative to the bland multi-national diet pushed through radios around the world by the big record companies.

"We are trying to create a new cultural proposition for the youth in an alternative way to contemporary show-biz. That's our fight!"

21
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

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Warsaw Village Band

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SELECT
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Jon Boden and John Spiers

Acoustic Alchemists

Jon Boden started listening to trad music as a spin off from Led Zeppelin and Jethro Tull. His partner John Spiers was once a '70s disco music DJ at college. And that shaped the way he arranges traditional dance music. Go figure. Yet only Mali's Rokia Traore, stopped them from picking up fRoots magazine's coveted Album of the Year honours in January. Chris Nickson poses the questions.

Young players are continually revitalizing traditional music. Some do it by bringing in electronic elements. Others, like the English duo of John Spiers and Jon Boden, are completely acoustic, but bring thrilling, powerful playing and imaginative arrangements to bear. Their first album, 2001's *Through & Through*, brought acclaim, and nominations in both the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards and the BBC Radio 3 World Music Award for best album. Prior to their sophomore disc, *Bellow*, (runner-up as fRoots magazine's Album of the Year) they'd picked up Horizon Award for best new act at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards. Not a bad way to start a career.

It all began quite innocuously, when melodeon player Spiers was "in a session at The Elm Tree in Oxford. Jon Boden turned up and was playing Irish tunes, he was living in London at the time. But then he sang some unaccompanied English songs and some with fiddle accompaniment - at the same time I was playing English dance tunes and we just decided to have a go at a duo. Six months later we actually had a rehearsal."

Spiers had played music since childhood, first on organ and piano, then taking cello lessons. The son of a Morris dancer, he bought a piano accordion while studying genetics at Cambridge, "and the sound prompted me to remember all the southern English morris tunes. I switched to melodeon a year or so later once I had started playing traditional music and realised the rhythmic potential of the melodeon."

His partner, took the back route into folk music, starting on classical guitar, then rock.

"I started listening to trad. music as a spin off from Led Zeppelin and Jethro Tull. Shortly after this I decided that learning to play the uilleann pipes would be the best way to get laid. Shortly after that I decided learning the fiddle would be the best way to get laid. It's an on-going process and I'm sure it will pay off eventually. I have recently taken up the concertina."

There's a range of influences in the music, from Kepa Junker's Basque melodies, to John Kirkpatrick's Morris music and '70s disco, and violinists like Dave Swarbrick and "any number of flash Irish fiddlers." There are obvious vocal nods to Martin Carthy and Peter Bellamy, but at the same time, part of the magic of Spiers and Boden is that they've transcended their inspirations.

Spiers: I always played music for as long as I can remember, we had a bontempi reed organ and a piano and I was always making tunes up on those instruments. I had a few proper piano lessons at school and dabbled with the cello as well. At the same time I saw a lot of morris dancing because my dad was and still is a dancer - the music for morris dancing went in subliminally as I never really played folk when I was a kid. It was only when I went to college that I bought a piano accordion to play instead of the piano and the sound prompted me to remember all the southern English morris tunes. I switched to melodeon a year or so later once I had started playing traditional music and realised the rhythmic potential of the melodeon.

Boden: I learnt classical guitar as a kid. I then got really into playing self indulgent heavy rock guitar as a teenager in the mistaken belief that it might help me get laid. I started listening to trad. music as a spin off from Led Zeppelin and Jethro Tull. Shortly after this I decided that learning to

play the uilleann pipes would be the best way to get laid. Shortly after that I decided learning the fiddle would be the best way to get laid. It's an on-going process and I'm sure it will pay off eventually. I have recently taken up the concertina.

Nickson: What influences?

Spiers: For melodeon playing I would say my biggest influence early on was John Kirkpatrick. Hearing Andy Cutting and Kepa Junker later really pushed me to explore the melodeon to it's limits. However I've always been a big fan of dance music in general - I used to be a '70s disco music DJ at college and that has shaped the way I like to arrange traditional dance music.

Boden: The people I've consciously aspired towards are singers like Peter Bellamy and Louis Killen and fiddlers like Swarbrick, Nancy Kerr any number of flash Irish fiddlers. In fact I think you are often more influenced by people you are naturally closer to in style so Martin Carthy and also John Tams probably had as much, if not a greater impact on my singing. Similarly when I first heard Eliza play fiddle it was like it all made sense suddenly.

Nickson: When *Through and Through* won the Radio 2 award, how did you react? Had you been expecting it?

Spiers: Well to be honest we won the best newcomer award in 2003 - but we were also nominated for it in 2002 just after *Through and Through* was released. It would have been a massive surprise if we had won it the first time - but you never expect that kind of thing. Although the second time we were hoping, it was a really nice feeling of recognition - I'd been busking on the streets two years earlier.

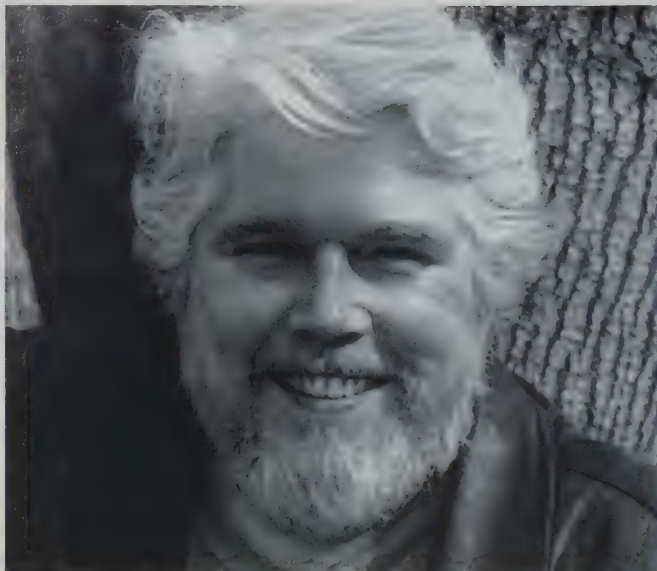
Nickson: And how did it change your approach to music for *Bellow*? How has your music developed?

Spiers: It didn't change a thing. By the time we won the award, *Bellow* had already been recorded. It was shaped much more by our experience of playing at festivals the year before than anything else. A lot of the music was worked up live on stage where you can really get a feel for the way it works. We feel we've got better because we've been playing together for longer!

Boden: The response of an audience is much more addictive than media plaudits and I think we have become more focused on the live dimension than we were when we put T&T together.

Nickson: What do you look for in a song or a tune?

Spiers: That's a really hard question - most traditional tunes are still there because they are good



Kenny Butterill

tunes. When choosing to play a particular dance tune I look for something I can do with it. It's very hard to describe the process of mucking about with tunes until you get a gut reaction that makes you really excited about playing it but that's how I work.

Boden: Because box and fiddle is not the most natural accompaniment for traditional song we generally wait for a song that shouts out a comfortable or interesting arrangement. I'm one of those singers who deep down thinks everything should really be unaccompanied so we try to only do stuff that benefits from instrumentation.

Nickson: You also play with Eliza Carthy? How did that happen, and what sort of experience has it been?

Spiers: We were asked to play three tracks on *Anglicana*, Eliza's latest album. About a year ago we were asked to join a UK tour based around the material on *Anglicana* and have been in the band ever since. It's been great fun, the band really gels together well with this line up – the potential with the interplay of three fiddles (or two fiddles and a viola) is still being explored by us and it's at a very exciting stage. Of course playing the big stages and being on TV is good fun too!

Nickson: Since *Below*, have you felt any pressure from that, being the new saviours of English traditional music?

Spiers: It's definitely made me want to do it all the more. I am slightly uncomfortable with the idea of anybody being a saviour of English music because I don't think it needs salvation. It's true to say that it has been one of the less 'trendy' genres of folk music and it has definitely been under-rep-

resented on the world stage. But if you approach it as something to be saved by making it cool or fusing it with other traditions, then you are already making a statement that English music is lacking in something. It isn't. I think the traditional material is fantastic and I am just glad that people are hearing it because we're doing it.

Nickson: And what are your plans for the future?

Boden: The big thing we're working on at the moment is a big band called BELLOWHEAD. Basically we're taking material from our first two albums and arranging it out for us plus three piece brass section, three piece string section, percussion and Benji Kirkpatrick on frets. It's pretty ambitious but we think we might just pull it off. Our first gig's in April at the Oxford Folk Festival and a few other summer festivals are interested.

The Road Less Travelled

Kenny Butterill set his own course through the modern minefield that passes for the music industry. While he has enjoyed success, he has also gained the respect of such peers as Willie P. Bennett and Ray Bonneville. Barry Hammond sets the stage.

Those who bemoan the state of the music industry, with its producers who bitch about declining record sales, while they stuff the airwaves with gangsta rap, manufactured boy groups and pop tarts like Britney Spears and Christine Aguilera, should take heart from the story of Canada's own Kenny Butterill.

Born in Ajax, but raised in Ottawa, Butterill now

lives in Northern California in the Santa Cruz mountains. He's a gentle, country and blues songwriter-producer molded from the same elements as J.J. Cale who, in his own words, from *Just A Songwriter*: "don't fit the Showbiz scene... I don't deal well with the road (and) I'd die in the Nashville machine."

In fact, he doesn't do anything the major labels would like. He's not young and pretty; he doesn't pay the slightest attention to demographics or musical trends; he doesn't hang out with famous people hoping their fame will rub off on him; he doesn't live in a major music center; he doesn't chase deals; and he doesn't listen to "name" producers, who tell him how his music should sound.

Kenny Butterill just writes songs, hires the best musicians he can find and releases his records on own label, NoBullSongs. Instead of dwelling in the limbo of obscurity, Butterill's approach has, in the space of two CD's – 2000's *No One You Know* and last year's *Just A Songwriter* – inspired international radio airplay, a No. 1 in the European charts with the single *How Far Can We Go*, and major press attention.

The moral of the story, like William Goldman says of the movie business, in *Adventures In The Screen Trade*, is: 'Nobody knows anything.' Don't listen to "experts."

Butterill says, "Before the release of my first CD, I was pitching my songs in Nashville and L.A. with limited success. The feedback I received then was that my music wouldn't work at radio. I used to have a box of hundreds of single-song cassettes that were pitched and rejected. Euphemistically, I called it the bucket of despair. It was frustrating, but I got to thinking if there was a way I could prove the accessibility of my material, then pitching would be easier. So, when some real good visibility happened for me on the Web in the late 1990's, we set out to find out for sure whether my music would work at radio, but on my own terms. And it did work! Both of my CD's have had lots of chart success, with just the music and no showbiz, an accomplishment that I'm very proud of, since many experts said this approach wouldn't work. The lesson learned is that there is more than one way to do the music business in order to achieve one's goals."

He thinks the music industry in general, "could well be in the burgeoning stages of a revolution – a good thing. The past rules no longer apply in this age of iPods, iTunes, etc. ... the fans demanding choice in what songs they buy, how and where they buy them and where they listen. These changes should auger well for the fans since the industry is being forced to focus more on quality."

The idea of quality is central to Butterill's approach. It's the same when it comes to recording musicians. "First and foremost," he says, "I'm a fan of their work. As a producer, I don't really care how famous a particular player is, or how successful, or whether they're in the charts – just that I really like their sound and that I think they would blend well with the 'feel' I'm going for on a particular tune. Making good, enduring art is first for me, and I'd say any success is a by-product of that."

The respect seems reciprocal in that Butterill has attracted the likes of Willie P. Bennett, Norton

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Buffalo and Ray Bonneville, who add their unique musical prowess to the last CD.

There's a level-headedness, a kind of centered, practical, calmness in Butterill's talk, which may be the result of his rural-based lifestyle, or of his interest in areas outside the music business. Thanks to Joseph Campbell, who "showed that folklore and myth can be important metaphors for understanding the modern world," he has a great interest in mythology. Eastern philosopher Alan Watts, who he says, "made eastern wisdom - e.g. Buddhism, accessible to those in the west," helped him to understand, "what living fully and well can mean." The concept of, "going into the forest where there is no previous path, of being able to be a forest dweller - these concepts were important to me, both in terms of living my life and in how I decided to approach the music biz."

Butterill also makes red wine and the nearness of the California vineyards is "an added bonus" to living where he does. His lifestyle is reflected in the cover art for Just A Songwriter, where the room he writes in and the various elements which are important to him are all depicted with a warmth and serenity that is echoed

in his music.

For a guy who shoveled snow for pocket money, played hockey outdoors, pumped gas and serviced cars while going to Bell High School in Nepean, and got a business degree at the University of Ottawa, the music business was important, but may be not so important that he'd give up his soul, his values, and his ideas about how to live his life.

"I have great admiration for those that make the road their life, but also know from my music friends it's a hard life, all consuming that doesn't always pay so well. What I've learned is to be true to myself, and that it's OK to choose to participate in the arts in the way you're most comfortable with and that is also personally fulfilling."

For Kenny Butterill, he can sit on his back porch, be connected with the music world online through his computer, and achieve success by being just a songwriter.

25
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Tubthumping



Win the Black Hen Music catalogue



Steve Dawson started Black Hen Music in 1995 to release his own albums, and those of Zubot and Dawson - Steve's award-winning collaboration with Jesse Zubot. Three years later, this label started to release an ever-expanding, diverse catalogue of adventurous, acoustic-based artists. They include Jim Byrnes, Jenny Whiteley, Geoff Berner, Great Uncles of the Revolution, Don Rooke, Chris Tarr, Linda McCrae and Bottleneck. And Steve has very kindly donated one disc of each for some lucky winner. Indeed, breaking with tradition, we are giving the entire collection to one person. All you have to do to win this wonderful collection is answer the following questions correctly and e-mail your efforts to penguineggs@shaw.ca Please include your postal address so we can pass on your prize.

Q 1: What trio recorded Geof Berner's Light Enough To Travel?

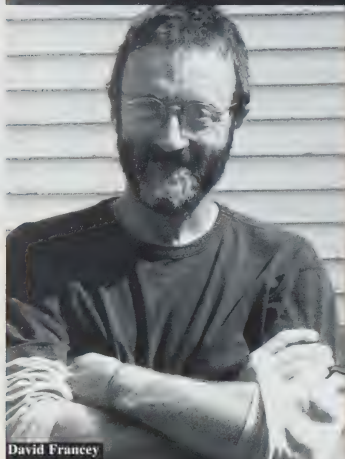
Q 2: Who first sang on a Zubot and Dawson album?

Q 3: What tribute did Spirit of the West record for Linda McCrae?

The winners of Beautiful: A Tribute To Gordon Lightfoot and Jez Lowe's Parish Notices are: Karen Graunke, Grande Prairie, AB; Debbie Blunt, St. Hubert, QC; Stu Muir, St. Albert, AB; Jim Gaffney, London, England; Frank Kingsley, Lennoxville, QC; Lisa Cook, London, ON; Rene Deschamps, King City, ON; Susan Spidle, Rose Bay, NS; Joy Doucette, Sudbury, ON; Elaine Tolley, Burlington, ON; Jon Kibzey, Thunder Bay, ON; William Hill, Comox, BC.

Albums of the Year

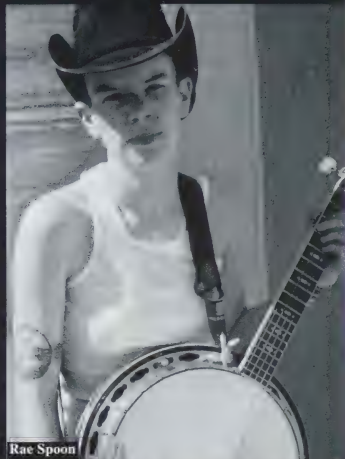
Critics favourite new discoveries and live acts of 2003



David Francey



Billy Bragg



Rae Spoon

1. David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music)
 2. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North)
 3. Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues)
 4. Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain)
 5. Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis)
- Various Artists: *Beautiful – A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot* (Borealis/NorthernBlues)
- Le Vent du Nord, *Maudite Moisson!* (Borealis)
- Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway)
- Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (True North)

Honourable mentions: Be Good Tanyas, *Chinatown* (Network); Bruce Cockburn, *You've Never Seen Everything* (True North); Fred Eaglesmith, *Bailin'* (ARL); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing The Water* (Borealis); Martin Simpson, *Righteousness and Humidity* (Red House); Chris Smither, *Train Home* (Hightone).

New Discoveries of the Year

1. Rae Spoon
2. Le Vent du Nord

Live Act of the Year

1. Billy Bragg
 2. Richard Thompson
- Daniel Lanois

Past Album of the Year Winners:

- 2002: Harry Manx, *Wise And Otherwise*
- 2001: David Francey, *Far End of Summer*

Past New Discoveries

- 2002: Tied: Ruthie Foster and Kathleen Edwards
- 2001: Harry Manx

Fifty-five members of the media, folk club and folk festival artistic directors, songwriters, speciality record store owners – actually, anyone with an everyday above average knowledge of folk, roots and world music in Canada participated in the third Penguin Eggs awards poll. That's a fairly hefty survey by any standard.

As in years past, we wanted individuals to list their favourite ten recordings released in 2003. Every nomination, listed alphabetically, received one point. The winner gathered the most points. A seven-way tie for fifth place meant nobody occupied the sixth to tenth spots.

The same formula applied for both New Discovery and Live Act – a new category this year – although, we only asked for three nominations for each of these awards. While the poll is uniquely Canadian in perspective, we did consult a couple of our regular international contributors. The only stipulation we placed on respondents was that they couldn't vote for anyone they worked with professionally.

And so David Francey wins his second Album of the Year award for *Skating Rink*. Rae Spoon took Favourite New Discovery of the Year and Billy Bragg earns Live Act of the Year. Much thanks to all those who kindly participated. – Roddy Campbell

Derek Armstrong: Radio Host, Northern Lights Radio Hour, CKLU, Sudbury. Fred Eaglesmith, *Balin' (AML)*; David Francey, *Skating Rink*, (Laker Music); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing the Water* (Borealis); The Grievous Angels, *Hanging Songs* (Jimmy Boyle); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); John Millard and Happy Day, *Citizens Awake!* (Happy Day); Harry Manx and Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Road Dog Divas, *Pony* (Independent); Kate Maki, *Confusion Unlimited* (Independent); Various Artists, *Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot* (Borealis/NorthernBlues). **New Discoveries:** Das Macht Show!, Mike Lynch, Kate Maki. **Live:** Road Dog Divas, Ron Sexsmith, Jackie Washington.

David Francey *Skating Rink*



David Francey *Skating Rink*

Blackie and the Rodeo Kings



Derek Andrews: President Folk Alliance Canada. Autorickshaw, *Autorickshaw* (Independent); Bomba, *A Mi Me Gusta* (Independent); Eliana Cuevas, *Cohesion* (Independent); H'Sao, *H'Sao* (Milles Pattes); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Mighty Popo, *Ngagara* (CBC Records); Nathan, *Stranger* (Independent); Don Rooke, *Atlas Travel* (Black Hen); Adam Solomon, *African Renaissance Blues* (Independent). **New Discoveries:** Autorickshaw, Adam Solomon, Tinariwen. **Live:** Habib Koite, Catarina Cardeal, Madagascar Slim.

Mike Barker: Artistic Director, Folk Under The Clock, Peterborough. Bruce Cockburn, *You've never seen Everything* (True North); Guy Davis, *Chocolate to the Bone* (Red House); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); Harry Manx, *Road Ragas* (Dog My Cat); Souad Massi, *Deb* (Universal); Jim Moray, *Sweet England* (Niblick is a giraffe Records !); The Paperboys, *Dilapidated Beauty* (Stompy Discs); Martin Simpson, *Righteousness & Humidity* (Red House); Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (Cooking Vinyl); Various Artists, *Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot* (Borealis/NorthernBlues). **New Discoveries:** Souad Massi, Jim Moray, Wailin' Jennys. **Live:** Afro Celts, Bruce Cockburn, Richard Thompson.

Vic Bell: Artistic Director, Nickleodeon Folk Club, Calgary. Be Good Tanyas, *Chinatown*

(Nettwerk); Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Greg Brown, Pete Heitzman, Garnet Rogers, Karen Savoca, *Live At The Black Sheep* (Snow Goose Songs); Bruce Cockburn, *You've Never Seen Everything* (True North); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); John Wort Hannam and The Sound Merchants, *Pocket Full of Holes* (Independent); Po' Girl, *Po' Girl* (Jerico Beach); Undertakin' Daddies, *Devil In The Rearview* (Caribou); Various Artists, *Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot* (Borealis/NorthernBlues); Le Vent Du Nord, *Maudite Moisson!* (Borealis); **New Discoveries:** Karla Anderson, Raghu Lokanathan, Alana Levandoski. **Live:** Leon and Eric Bibb, Solomon Burke, Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder.

Erin Benjamin. Executive Director, Ontario Council of Folk Festivals. Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, *BARK*, (True North); Bruce Cockburn, *You've Never Seen Everything*, (True North); Emmylou Harris, *Stumble Into Grace*, (Nonesuch); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey*, (Acony Records); LappElectro, *Closer Than They Appear* (Independent); Rachels, *Systems/Layers*, (Quarterstick); The Great Uncles of the Revolution, *Blow The House Down*, (Black Hen); The Polyphonic Spree, *Light and Day*, (679); Tord Gustavsen Trio, *Changing Places*, (ECM); Various Artists, *Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot*, (Borealis/NorthernBlues). **New Discoveries:** Lori Cullen, Rachels, Mary Gauthier. **Live:** Calexico, Lynn Miles, Mariza.

Don Bird: Artistic Director, Summerfolk, Owen Sound. Kiran Ahluwalia, *Beyond Boundaries* (Festival); Arlene Bishop, *Cut A Man's Heart Out* (Direct); Jesse Cook, *Nomad* (Narada World); La Chango Family, *La Chango Family* (Select); Aengus Finnan, *Northwind* (Borealis); Finest Kind, *Silks & Spices*, (Fallen Angle Music); Jou Tou, *Jou Tou* (Festival); Lynn Miles, *Unravel* (Okra-Tone); The Paperboys, *Dilapidated Beauty*, (Stompy Discs.); Jimmy Rankin, *Handmade* (Song Dog). **New Discoveries:** Jou Tou, Arlene Bishop, Sarah Jane Morris. **Live:** Jonathon Richmond, Betty & The Bobs with The Arrogant Worms, Habana Sax.

Roddy Campbell: Editor, Penguin Eggs. Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir, *Saint Hubert* (Shoutin' Abner Pim); Bruce Cockburn, *You've Never Seen Everything* (True North); Ben Darvill, *Son of Dave*, (Independent); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Shoglenifty, *The Arms Dealer's Daughter* (Compass); Chris Smither, *Train Home* (Hightone); John Spiers & Jon Bowden, *Bellow* (Fellside); Rae Spoon, *Throw Some Dirt On Me* (Independent); Warsaw Village Band, *People's Spring* (Jaro); **New Discoveries:** Horace X, Ben Darvill, Rae Spoon. **Live:** Billy Bragg, Ben Darvill, Horace X.

Kerry Clarke. Associate Producer, Calgary Folk Music Festival. Radio Host: Alternative to What, CJSW, Calgary. Danny Barnes, *Dirt on the Angel*,

(Terminus); Buck 65, *Talkin' Honky Blues* (Warner); Hedningarna, 1989-2003 (Northside); Howe Gelb, *The Listener* (Thrill Jockey); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Ojos de Brujo, *Bari* (Le Fabrica de Colores); Po' Girl, *Po' Girl* (Jericho Beach); Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem, *Gambling Eden* (Signature Sounds); Thea Gilmore, *Avalanche* (Hungry Dog); Tom Ze, *Jogos de Armar* (Sterns). **New Discoveries:** Lucia Pulido, Safa, Stew. **Live:** Mercan Dede, Dan Bern, Jane Siberry.

Paul Emile-Comeau. Freelance Journalist - Dirty Linen, No Depression. Vic Chesnutt, *Silver Lake* (New West); David Grisman, *Life of Sorrow* (Acoustic Disc); Roscoe Holcomb, *An Untamed Sense of Control* (Smithsonian Folkways); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); Boris Kovac & Ladaaba Orchest. *Ballads at the End of Time* (Piranha); Jim Kweskin Band with Samoa Wilson, *Now and Again* (Blix Street); Harry Manx, *Road Ragas* (Dog My Cat); Various Artists, *Down in the Basement: Joe Bussard's Treasure Trove of Vintage 78s* (Old Hat); Various Artists, *The Rough Guide to Thailand* (Rough Guide/World Music Network); Various Artists, *World 2003* (Narada). **New Discoveries:** Les Charbonniers de l'Enfer, Allan Gerber, The Red Stick Ramblers. **Live:** Chuck Brodsky, The Bill Hilly Band, Galitcha.

Doug Cox. Artistic Director, Vancouver Island, Musicfest. Kiran Ahluwalia, *Beyond Boundries* (Independent); Chris Chandler and Anne Feeney, *The Wholly Stolen Empire*, (Independent); das macht show, *Four Legs Good* (Independent); Michael Franti & Spearhead, *Everyone Deserves Music*; Ken Hamm, *Fingerlicks* (North Track); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); Van Morrison, *What's Wrong With This Picture*, (Blue Note); Robert Randolph & the Family Band, *Unclassified*, (Warner Bros.); Loudon Wainwright III, *So Damn Happy* (Sanctuary); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); **New Discoveries:** Raghu Lokanathan, Kim Sinh, Derek Trucks Band. **Live:** Terry Bozzio, Michael Franti, Jane Siberry.

27
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Awards Poll

Harry Manx
JUBILEE

Kevin Breit



Tom Coxworth. Radio Host, Folk Routes, CKUA, Alberta. Rani Arbo & Daisy Mayhem, *Gambling Eden*, (Signature); Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, *BARK*, (True North); Johnny Cash, *Cash Unearthed*, (American); Danu, *The Road Less Traveled*, (Shanachie); David Francey, *Skating Rink*, (Festival); Bill Jones, *Two Year Winter* (Compass); Nathalie MacMaster, *Blueprint*, (Rounder); David Olney, *The Wheel*, (Loudhouse); Martin Simpson, *Righteousness & Humidity*, (Topic); Joe Strummer & the Mescaleros, *Streetcore*, (Hellcat). **New Discoveries:** Emily Kurn, John Wort Hannam, Chuck Prophet. **Live:** Leon & Eric Bibb, Martyn Joseph, Danu & Niamh Parsons.

Steve Dawson. Musician. Bob Brozman and Debashish Bhattacharya, *Mahima* (Riverboat); Rev. Gary Davis, *If I Had My Way* (Smithsonian Folkways); Bill Frisell, *The Intercontinentals* (Nonesuch); Roscoe Holcomb, *An Untamed Sense of Control* (Smithsonian Folkways); Daniel Lanois, *Shine* (Anti); David Lindley and Wally Ingram, *Twango Bango III* (Pleemhead); Rene Lussier and Eugene Chadbourne, *L'Oasis* (Victo); Chris Whitley, *Hotel Vast Horizon* (Messenger); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway); Various Artists, *From Honolulu to Hollywood* (The Old Masters). **New Discoveries:** Ridley Bent. **Live:** Wayne Horowitz and Zony Mash, Kid Koala, Daniel Lanois.

Bruce Deachman. Jim Bryson, *The North Side Benches*, (Orange); Emmylou Harris, *Stumble Into Grace*, (Nonesuch); Kate Maki, *Confusion Unlimited*, (Independent); Kate & Anna McGarrigle, *La Vache Qui Pleure* Les disques de la Tribu (); John Mellencamp, *Trouble No More* (Columbia); Ox, *Dustbowl Revival* (Black Hen); Damien Rice, *O* (Vector); Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez, *The Trouble With Humans* (Train Wreck); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway). **New Discoveries:** Dan Bern, Ox, Damien Rice. **Live:**



Jim Bryson, Daniel Lanois, John Prine.

Andy Donnelly. Radio Host, The Celtic Show, CKUA, Alberta. Capercaille, *Choice Language* (Survival); Bill Jones, *Two Years Winter* (Compass); Enoch Kent, *Songs of Love, Lust And Loathing* (Second Avenue); Robin Laing, *Water of Life* (Greentrax); Matt McGinn, *Matt McGinn* (Greentrax); Garnet Rogers, Karen Savoca, Pete Heitzman and Greg Brown, *Live at the Blacksheep* (Snow Goose); Runrig with Paul Mounsey, *Proterra* (Ridge); Shoormal, *Migrant* (Greentrax); Various Artists, *Hamish Henderson - The Bairns O Adam* (Greentrax); The Waterboys, *Universal Hall*, (Mintyfresh). **New Discoveries:** Bill Jones, North Cregg, Shoormal. **Live:** Bad Haggis, Capercaille, Martyn Joseph.

Kerry Doole. Freelance Journalist - Words & Music, Performing Songwriter; Penguin Eggs, Jim Bryson, *The North End Benches* (Universal); Buck 65, *Talkin' Honky Blues* (Warner); Emmylou Harris, *Stumble Into Grace* (Warner); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Oh Susanna, *Oh Susanna* (Nettwerk); Joe Strummer and The Mescaleros, *Streetcore* (Vagrant); Various Artists, *Martin Scorsese's The Blues* (Universal); The Weakerthans, *Reconstruction Site* (Epitaph); Robert Wyatt, *Cuckooland* (Rykodisc); Dwight Yoakam, *Population One* (KOCH). **New Discoveries:** Matt Mays, Drive By Truckers, Chris Warren. **Live:** Bjork, Drive By Truckers, Richard Thompson.

Steve Edge. Artistic Director The Rogue Folk Club, Vancouver. Radio Host, The Edge On Folk, CFTV, Vancouver. Afro Celts, *Seed* (Real World); Rani Arbo & Daisy Mayhem, *Gambling Eden* (Signature Sounds); Dervish, *Spirit* (Whirling Discs); Patty Larkin, *Red=Luck* (Vanguard); Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Tim O'Brien, *Traveler* (Sugar Hill); Orchestra Baobab, *Specialist in all Styles* (Nonesuch); Martin Simpson, *Righteousness & Humidity* (Red House); Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (Cooking Vinyl); The Waifs, *Up All Night* (Jarrah); **New Discoveries:** Po' Girl, Mariza, Flook. **Live:** Richard Thompson, David Lindley & Wally Ingram, Lunasa.

Rick Fenton. Artistic Director, The Winnipeg Folk Festival. Ojos de Brujo, *Bari* (La Fabrica de Colores); Kasey Chambers, *Barricades & Brickwalls* (Warner); Bob Geldof, *Sex, Age, and Death* (Koch); The Warsaw Village Band, *Peoples' Spring* (Jaro); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); Mary Gauthier, *Filth & Fire* (Signature Sounds); Kaki King, *Everybody Loves You* (Velour); Jorane, *Jorane* (Tacca); Art Turner, *Jade* (Redtail). **New Discoveries:** Hamid Baroudi, Nathan, Kaki King. **Live Acts:** Billy Bragg, Bob Geldof, Ojos de Brujo.

Richard Floh. Publicist, Toronto. Arlene Bishop, *Cut a Man's Heart Out* (Independent); Blackie & The Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Kevin Breit/Harry Manx: *Jubilee* (Northern Blues), Solomon Burke, *Soul Alive* (Rounder); Buddy Guy, *Blues Singer* (Silvertone); Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Growl* (Philo); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); Richard Thompson, *1000 Years of Popular Music* (Beeswing); Paul Thorn, *Mission Temple Fireworks Stand* (Virgin); Greg Quill/Kevin Tollerust, *So Rudely Interrupted* (True North). **New Discoveries:** Justin Rutledge, Ann Vriend, Po' Girl. **Live:** Solomon Burke, Buddy Guy, Greg Quill with Garth Hudson.

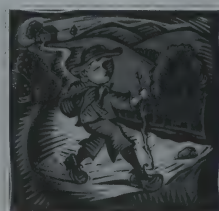
Liz Harvey-Foulds. Artistic Director, Live From the Rock Folk Festival. Red Rock. Ball and Chain. *Trouble All the Time* (Independent); Brock Zeeman, *Cold Winter Comes Back* (Independent); Burnt, *The Avenue* (Sunshine); Joel Fafard, *Rocking Horse* (Independent); Ken Hamm, *Fingerlicks* (North Track); Nathan Caswell, *Einstein's Brain* (Independent); Pierre Shryver Band, *Blue Drag* (New Canadian); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); Sahra Featherstone, *Sahra Featherstone* (Independent); Vally, *Viva Vally: Live at Last* (Mar Productions Ltd). **New Discoveries:** Fig For A Kiss, Claire Jenkins, Brock Zeeman. **Live:** Barachois, The D-Rangers, Mark Reeves.

E. David Gregory. Editor, Canadian Folk Music. Kiran Ahluwalia, *Beyond Boundaries* (Kiran Music); Jon Bartlett & Rika Ruebsaat, *Come To Me in Canada* (CFW); Jon Bartlett & Rika

LHASA THE LIVING ROAD



RICHARD THOMPSON



The Old Kit Bag



Ruebsaat, *The Young Man from Canada*: B.C. Songs from the PJ Thomas Collection (CFW); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); John Kirkpatrick, *Gina Le Faux*, *Le Vent du Nord*, *Maudite Moisson!* (Borealis); John Leeder, *Fresh Forest Breeze* (Leeder); Stringband, *The Indispensable, 1972-2002* (Nick); Phil Tanner, *The Gower Nightingale* (Veteran); Various Artists, *Fanfare for the South West* (Fellside); Various Artists, *Here's Luck to a Man: Gypsy Songs & Music from South-East England* (Musical Traditions). **New Discoveries:** Derek Lofthouse, *Le Vent du Nord*, George Withers. **Live:** Moira Cameron & Paddy Tutty, Niamh Parsons, George Withers.

Fish Griwkowsky. Journalist and Photographer, The Edmonton Sun. Billy Bragg, *The Essential Billy Bragg* (Outside Music); Bonnie Prince Billy, *Master and Everyone* (Palace/Drag City); The Buttless Chaps, *Love This Time* (Mint); Calexico, *Feast of Wire* (Quarterstick); Jay Farrar, *Terror Blues* (Artemis); Roscoe Holcomb, *An Untamed Sense of Wonder* (Smithsonian/Folkways); Robin Hunter and the Six Foot Bullies, *Your Heart My Sleeve* (Independent); Jayhawks, *Rainy Day Music* (Lost Highway); Smog, *Supper* (Drag City); Ben Sures, *Goodbye Pretty Girl* (Independent). **New Discoveries:** Holopaw, Ox, The Swiftys. **Live:** Calexico, Smog, Randy Travis.

Barry Hammond. Penguin Eggs Reviewer. Be



Good Tanyas, *Chinatown* (Netwerk); The Rick Fines Trio, *Riley Wants His Life Back* (Independent); The Jayhawks, *Rainy Day Music* (Lost Highway); Rickie Lee Jones, *The Evening of My Best Day* (V2 Records); Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Po' Girl, *Po' Girl* (Jericho Beach); Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez, *The Trouble With Humans* (Lone Star); Undertakin' Daddies, *Devil In The Rearview* (Caribou); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway). **New Discoveries:** Drive By Truckers, Rick Fines Trio, Wailin' Jennys. **Live:** Harry Manx with Kiran Ahluwalia. Wailin' Jennys, Djelmady Tounkara

Cam Hayden. Artistic Director, Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival. Marcia Ball, *So May Rivers* (Alligator); Morgan Davis, *Pain Killer* (NorthernBlues); Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets with Sammy Meyers, *Which Way is Texas?* (Bullseye); Glamour Puss, *Wire and Wood* (NorthernBlues); Buddy Guy, *Blues Singer* (Silvertone); John Hammond, *Ready For Love* (Back Porch); Big Dave McLean, *Blues From the Middle* (Stony Plain); Delbert McClinton, *Room to Breathe* (New West); Tracy Nelson, *Live From Cell Block D* (Independent); Kim Wilson, *Lookin' For Trouble* (MC Records). **New Discoveries:** J.P. Leblanc, Nick Curran, Robert Randolph and the Family Band. **Live:** Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, Tribute to Michael Bloomfield featuring Al Kooper, Nick Gravenites, The Ford Brothers Blues Band and Coco Montoya, Ruth Brown with Duke Robillard.

Ken Hunt. Freelance Journalist, fRoots, Mojo, Penguin Eggs. Albion Band, *Rise Up Like The Sun* (Fledg'ling); Iva Bittová, *J.h.* (Indies Records); Les Charbonniers de l'Enfer, *Wô* (La Tribu); Jablko, *Devadã Vlna* (Supraphon); Scarlett O' and Jürgen Ehle, *Fast mit Neid* (John Silver Productions); Parissa & Ensemble Dastan, *Shoorideh* (Network); Mohammad Reza Shajarian, Hossein Alizadeh, Kayhan Kalhor and Homayoun Shajarian, *Faryad* (World Village); Phil Tanner, *The Gower Nightingale* (Veteran); Martyn Wyndham-Read and others, *Song Links* (Fellside); Various Artists, *Hamish Henderson Tribute Album: A' The Bairns O Adam* (Greentrax). **New Discoveries:** Ambrozijn, Charbonniers de l'Enfer, Yggdrasil. **Live:** Ali Akbar Khan, Tiger Lillies with the Kronos Quartet, Wenzel & Band.

Cal Koat. Radio Host, Celt In A Twist, CJVB, Vancouver. Afro Celts, *Seed* (Real World); Bajofondo Tango Club, *Bajofondo Tango Club* (MRP); Cabas, *Contacto* (EMI Latin); Karsh Kale, *Liberation* (Six Degrees); Martyn Bennett, *Grit* (Real World); Miary Lepiera, *Soro* (Tinder); Mylene, *Mylene* (Fast Horse); Ojos de Brujo, *Bari* (La Fabrica de Colores); Ry Cooder, *Mambo Sinuendo* (World Circuit); Ziggy Marley, *Dragonfly* (BMG). **New Discoveries:** Bembeya Jazz, Miary Lepiera, Kristi Stassinopoulou. **Live:** Afro Celts, Orchestra Baobab, Gotan Project.

Pat Langston. Freelance Journalist, The Ottawa Citizen, No Depression, Penguin Eggs. June Carter Cash, *Wildwood Flower* (Dualtone); The Del McCoury Band, *It's Just the Night* (Del McCoury Music); The Fisk Jubilee Singers, *In Bright Mansions* (Curb); Kimmo Pohjonen, *Kluster* (Westpark); The Mighty Popo, *Ngagara*, (CBC); Natalie MacMaster, *Blueprint*, (ViK/BMG); Chris Smither, *Train Home*, (Hightone); Various Artists, *Six Strings North of the Border, Volume 2* (Borealis); April Verch, *From Where I Stand* (Rounder); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway). **New Discoveries:** Tony Turner, April Verch, Rae Spoon. **Live:** Zachary Stevenson, Steve Forbert, Oliver Mukudz. **Larry LeBlanc.** Canadian Bureau Chief, Billboard. Matthew Barber, *Means & Ends* (Paperbag Records); Eubie Blake, *Memories of You* (Shout Factory); Jimmy Bowskill, *Old Soul* (Independent); Elvis Costello, *North* (Deutsche Grammophon); Shelby Lynn, *Identity Crisis* (Capitol); Nerissa & Katryna Nields, *This Town Is Wrong* (Rounder); Jimmy Rankin, *Handmade* (Song Dog Music); Earl Scruggs, Doc Watson, Ricky Skaggs, *The Three Pickers* (Rounder); Tarbox Ramblers, *A Fix Back East* (Rounder); Merle Travis, *In Boston* (Rounder). **New Discoveries:** Cora Egan, Steve Singh, Lester Quitzau. **Live:** Blue Rodeo, Susie Vinnick, Sarah Harmer.

Roger Levesque. Freelance Journalist, The Edmonton Journal, Penguin Eggs. Kiran Ahluwalia, *Beyond Boundaries* (Independent); Cibelle, *Cibelle* (Six Degrees); DuOud, *Wild Serenade* (Indigo); Bill Frisell, *The Intercontinentals* (Nonesuch); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Don Ross, *Robot Monster* (Narada); Scarlett, Washington & Whiteley, *Sitting On A Rainbow* (Borealis); Shooogenity, *The Arms Dealer's Daughter* (Compass); Wimme, *Barru* (Northside). **New Discoveries:** Martyn Joseph, Filippo Gambetta, Le Vent du Nord. **Live:** Billy Bragg, Mariza, Mike Seeger.



Sandy MacDonald. Journalist, The Halifax Daily News. June Carter Cash, *Wildwood Flower* (Dualtone); Susan Crowe, *Book of Days* (Corvus); Buddy Guy, *Blues Singer* (Silvertone); Dixie Hummingbirds, *Diamond Jubilee* (Rounder); Fred Eaglesmith, *Balin'* (AML); Wanda Jackson, *Heart Trouble* (CMH); The Jayhawks, *Rainy Day Music* (American/Lost Highway); Matt Mays, *Matt Mays* (Independent); Kate Rusby, *Underneath The Stars* (Compass); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway). **New Discoveries:** Robert Randolph & The Family Band, The McDades, Jill Barber. **Live:** Billy Bragg, John Prine, Fred Eaglesmith.

Charles Mandel. Freelance Journalist, Globe & Mail, The Calgary Herald, Penguin Eggs. Acoustic Syndicate, *Terra Firma* (Sugar Hill); Baka Beyonc, *East to West* (Narada); Boban Markovic Orkestar, *Live in Belgrade* (Piranha); Boris Kovac & Ladaaba Orchest, *Ballads at the End of Time* (Piranha); The Country Gentlemen, *On the Road* (Smithsonian/Folkways); Fiamma Fumana, *Home* (Ominum); Javier Ruibal, *Sahara* (Riverboat); Mayra Caridad Valdes, *La Diosa del Mar* (Mateca); Misty In Roots, *Roots Controller* (Real World); Zemoe, *El Gallo Bueno* (Aagoo); **New Discoveries:** Debashish Bhattacharya and Bob Brozman, La Sonera Calaveras, Yusa.

Doug McArthur. Musician, Artistic Director Eaglewood Folk Festival. Johnny Cash, *American IV: The Man Comes Around* (Lost Highway); Leonard Cohen, *The Essential Leonard Cohen* (Legacy); David Essig, *Declaration Day* (Appaloosa); Marianne Girard, *In This Town* (My Paint Music); Enoch Kent, *I'm a Workin' Chap* (Second Avenue); Rob Lamothe, *Above the Wing is Heaven* (Southgroove); Maria Mauldar, *Richland Woman Blues* (Stony Plain); Ian Tamblyn, *Voice in the Wilderness* (North Track); Cassandra Wilson, *Belly of the Sun* (Capitol); Warren Zevon, *The Best of Warren Zevon* (Electra). **New Discoveries:** Manitoba Hal, Susan Latimer, Alana Levandoski. **Live:** Mark Reeves,

Kristin Sweetland, Alfie Zappacosta

Chopper McKinnon. Radio Host, Canadian Spaces, CKCU-FM, Ottawa. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Susan Crowe, *Book of Days* (Corvus); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Rick Fines, *Riley Wants His Life Back* (Festival); Finest Kind, *Silks and Spices* (Angle); Ron Hynes, *Get Back Change* (Borealis); Garnet Rogers, Karen Savoca, Pete Heitzman and Greg Brown, *Live at the Blacksheep* (Snow Goose); Bob Snider, *Stealin' Home* (Borealis); Ian Tamblyn, *Like The Way You're Thinkin'* (North Track); Various Artists, *Beautiful: A Gordon Lightfoot Tribute* (Borealis/Northern Blues). **New Discoveries:** Harmony Trowbridge, Alise Marlene, The Undesirables. **Live:** Zak Stevenson, Arlene Bishop, Betty & the Bobs.

Heather McLeod. Musician, CBC Radio Thunder Bay. Charlie Angus & the Grievous Angels, *Hanging Songs* (Jimmy Boyle Records); The Bebob Cowboys, *Some Kind of Fantasy* (Independent); The Be Good Tanyas, *Chinatown* (Netwerk); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing the Water* (Borealis); Kate Maki, *Confusion Unlimited* (Independent); The Paperboys, *Dilapidated Beauty* (Stompy Discs); Evalyn Parry, *Unreasonable* (Outspoken Productions); Ben Sures, *Goodbye Pretty Girl* (Independent); The Two Minute Miracles, *Volume III: The Silence of Animals* (Teenage USA recordings); Various Artists, *Groovy Mondays* (Independent). **New Discoveries:** Miranda Stone, Ian North, Deborah Romeyn. **Live:** Rita Chiarelli, Grievous Angels, Ray Bonneville.

Tom Metuzals. Dialogue Communications, Toronto. The Be Good Tanyas, *Chinatown*, (Netwerk); Black and the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Jim Bryson, *The North Side Benches* (Independent); Joe Henry, *Tiny Voices* (Anti); Harry Manx/Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Lewis Melville, *Noah's Work* (DROG); Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (True North); Rufus Wainwright, *Want One* (Dreamworks); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway). **New Discoveries:** The

Silver Hearts, my turntable. **Live:** Michael Franti, The Silver Hearts, Guy Clark.

Tony Montague. Freelance Journalist, fRoots, Georgia Straight, Penguin Eggs. Cibelle, *Cibelle* (Six Degrees); Ibrahim Ferrer, *Buenos Hermanos* (Nonesuch); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Lo' jo, *Au Cabaret Sauvage* (Universal); Lúnasa, *Redwood* (Green Linnet); Mariza, *Fado Curvo* (Times Square); Natalie MacMaster, *Blueprint* (BMG); Os Tribalistas, *Tribalistas* (EMI); Super Rail Band de Bamako, *Kongo Sigui* (Label Bleu); Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (True North). **New Discoveries:** Cibelle, Abdullah Chhadeh and Nara, Sara Marriores. **Live:** Mariza, Richard Thompson, Lo' Jo.

Chris Nickson. Freelance Journalist, fRoots, Penguin Eggs. Cibelle, *Cibelle* (Six Degrees); Clotaire K, *Lebanese* (Independent); Shirley Collins, *Within Sound* (Fled'gling); De Fries & D. Beck, *Balance* (Independent); Haugaard & Hoirup, *Om Sommeren* (Go! Danish Folk Music Productions); Kristi Stassinopolou, *The Secret of the Rocks* (Tinder); Otis Taylor, *Truth is not Fiction* (Telarc); Various Artists, *Festival in the Desert* (World Village); Various Artists, *Ghana Soundz* (Sound Way); Warsaw Village Band, *People's Spring* (Jaro). **New Discoveries:** De Fries & D. Beck, Cibelle, Jim Moray. **Live:** Oysterband, Billy Bragg, Haugaard & Hoirup.

Peter North. Freelance Journalist, The Edmonton Journal. Radio Host Deadends and Detours, CK-UA Alberta. Marcia Ball, *So Many Rivers* (Alligator); Bebob Cowboys, *Some Kind of Fantasy* (Festival); Ray Benson, *Beyond Time* (Audium); Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Rodney Crowell, *Fate's Right Hand* (Epic); Danu, *The Road Less Travelled* (Shanachie); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Chris Smith, *Train Home* (Hightone); Chip Taylor and Carrie Rodriguez, *The Trouble With Humans* (Texas Music Group); Various Artists, *Living Lovin' Losin'*, *Tribute to the Lowlin Brothers* (Lost Highway); **New Discoveries:** Sarah Jane Morris, Tim Easton, Gene Pistilli. **Live:** Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder, Bruce Springsteen, Little Feat.



Joel Kroeker



Melodrama



IN STORES
FEBRUARY 24th

"Melodrama starts strong, with catchy, singable ballads and ends even stronger, with genre-challenging experimentation like the Threepenny cabaret swagger of 'Naked Beauty' and the soulful 'Blue Moon Lounge'."

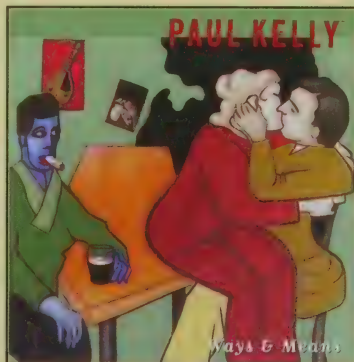
- NOW Magazine

ON TOUR WITH:

PAUL KELLY

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A Cut Above

The rise of David Francey to the forefront of the Canadian folk scene in the past four years has surpassed even his expectations. The former carpenter, and winner of the Penguin Eggs Album of the Year for a second time, has his most ambitious recording to date set for release this summer. Roddy Campbell hears how Francey ended up collaborating with the celebrated Nashville-based Americana collective, Dead Reckoners.

"There's no way in the world I'm going to be a star," — David Francey, *Penguin Eggs*, Spring 2001.

Right, pal! And I'm Charles Bukowski. Since that interview, David Francey has earned two Penguin Eggs critics' awards for Album of the Year, one Juno and a second nomination (announced at the time of writing). He plays to packed venues wherever he goes. Millions watched his video on television. And peers, as diverse as Del McCoury and James Keelaghan, sing his praises as well as his songs. So go on tell me that nice man Francey is not a star.

Like John Prine's grandpa, Francey hammered nails in planks for a pay cheque. That was a mere four years ago. Now, in his early 50s, he has just completed his most ambitious recording to date with three of the most respected Americana musicians in the USA — Kevin Welch, Keiran Kane, and Fats Kaplin. Due for release this summer, *The Waking Hour* obviously marks a shift from its predecessors. Nothing radical, mind you, just the odd excursion into country blues on the back of a crack rhythm section as weathered as the rock of ages.

Muti-instrumentalist Kaplin's credits stretch from Garth Brooks to Mark Knopfler. Waylon Jennings and Ricky Skaggs covered Welch's songs. And Kane, as one half of the O'Kanes, scored numerous country hits, including the No. 1 single *Can't Stop My Heart From Loving You*. Together, they form the back-



David Francey

bone of the tantalising Nashville collective, Dead Reckoners.

"I've always been drawn to that lot," says Francey. "I was nuts about the O'Kanes. Kieran is somebody whom I've always held in awfully high esteem for his ability and voice. I thought, 'I'm going to go and sing with Keiran Kane; how bad can that be?' They brought a bit of a freshness. They took a direction that is very rhythmic, very compelling."

They initially met at the Winnipeg Folk Music Festival in 2000 at a joint workshop. At its conclusion Kane was gobsmacked. Immediately, he colared Francey and suggested they record together. "At that point, I still had *Torn Screen Door* out, so I said, 'Down the road, that would be great'."

They kept in touch — an e-mail here and there. *Far End Of Summer* followed in 2001. It won a Juno and a Penguin Eggs critics' Album of the Year award. Offers continued north from Nashville. But Francey still had another record in his head and wanted it free from outside influences. The result was *Skating Rink*.

"I thought, 'Well now I've done my three, I can give them a shout.' We had five days in a row when everybody was going to be in Nashville. I came back from (Tønder) Denmark for two days and then flew to Nashville. They had never heard the songs before. I was really lax about getting everything together. . . Anyway, we went into the studio and set up four microphones and did them live off the floor. It was great fun."

And to prove it Francey spins a great story. Sitting in the railway station in Tønder, on his way to visit friends in northern Denmark, he started writing *Morning Train*. Its key characters: Christ, Buddha and Allah. He needed a fourth verse to sum it up.

"So I'm sitting in the studio and I said, 'Boys,

I'm a bit worried because I don't have this fourth verse.' And Kevin Welch looks over the top of his glasses and he goes, 'Francey, you didn't give the Devil his due. You've got to give the Devil his due.' I said, 'Oh hell, you're right.' I went outside and wrote the last verse and it worked really well."

There's a deceptive simplicity to David Francey's folk songs. While seldom judgmental, his social commentaries often carry an imposing presence, frequently conveying a natural empathy for the downtrodden. On the new disc it's misfits at a bus station. That sensitivity, he says, he owes to his father and to years of living at a subsistence level while working construction.

"I spent several periods of my life when I had very little at all and had to climb out of a hole."

Still, several of the songs on *Waking Hour* were inspired by trips (*Ashtabula* and *Interstate*) and events (*Fourth of July* and *Wishing Well*) in the U.S. While the latter looks at the grim media circus surrounding the execution of Oklahoma bomber, Timothy McViegh, *Fourth of July* provides a neutral observer's view of all-encompassing American patriotism.

"They are so different from us, man. I really feel like I'm in a foreign country when I'm down there. I like them. The Americans I meet are not the ones pulling strings on the world. They are interesting people. But the things you see down there. . ."

"It was there on the anniversary of September 11. It looked for all the world like it was a Fourth of July celebration. On every second lamppost there was a huge flag flying. It was odd. It was very American. If we suffered a calamity like that, I don't know how we would mark it but I'm pretty sure we wouldn't be decking everything in flags. I don't think it's wrong or anything like that; it's just a mark of difference."

Kaplin, Welch and Kane will tour Canada this fall with Francey. In the meantime, he will tour with Ontario-based songwriter and guitarist, Terry Tufts. Dave Clark, Francey's partner from the outset, has shifted his focus to his part-time bluegrass band Steel Rail. He also intends working on a third solo album.

"We spent a lot of time on the road and I don't think it's Dave's favourite thing to do. I don't blame him. I don't have a choice in the matter: if I don't go out I don't eat. I thoroughly love the guy but he needs to do his own thing too and I recognize that."

Dave Clark and his friends Simon Lepage and Gaston Bernard helped Francey record his debut, *Torn Screen Door*. James Keelaghan also put in an appearance and later covered *Red-winged Blackbird*. *Torn Screen Door* took almost two years to complete after a lifetime of gestation. Up to that point in 1999, David Francey had worked on the railways, in the bush, and on construction sites in order to provide for his family. Within a year, and fast approaching 50, he had launched a new career.

"I don't regret working in construction. Those were great years for me. Mind you, I knew all along I wasn't really cut out to be a carpenter. It wasn't my passion in life. I knew there was something else I should have been doing. Right after the first time I had played, which was in the basement of the Cliff House in Ayers Cliff, and it was packed to the rafters, I remember taking a walk that night and thinking, 'Ah that's what I'm here for. That's what I'm supposed to be doing.'"

"It was many years after that, but that was the moment where I thought, I know what I should be

doing. I was lucky that way – getting a nod at it. I could still be writing and doing nothing with it, you know. I would have been happy, anyway – not as happy.

He has now recorded three more albums in the past three years. Surely a clear case of making up for lost time. So David, do you wish you had started recording sooner?

"Yes, I sure do. But I couldn't. I didn't have the confidence. When I was younger, I didn't have the songs because I hadn't lived enough to write about anything worth while. Theoretically, it would be wonderful to be doing this when you're a lot younger. Again, the flip side is you're ill-prepared for what you might need. It's a great life and pretty rewarding in many ways. You sure meet some nice people."

Bluegrass patriarch Del McCoury included. McCoury just recorded Francey's *Mill Towns* on *It's Just the Night*. While his songs have been recorded by the likes of James Keelaghan, Francey was stunned by McCoury's cover. After all, the former member of Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys, is one of the most distinguished practitioners of traditional bluegrass and a member of The Grand Ol' Opry.

The recording of *Mill Towns* was fortuitous, as these things often are. Francey's manager, and owner of Festival Distribution, Jack Schuler, slipped McCoury a couple of CDs while ferrying him around Vancouver. Obviously impressed, a meeting was arranged with Del's son Ronnie in Nashville during the 2003 Folk Alliance Conference.

"We were supposed to meet for an hour and have

a coffee and just yack. It ended up being four or five hours. It was really great. He mentioned at the time, 'Dad's looking at *Mill Towns*.' But Del McCoury listens to all the albums. He picks all the tunes.

"I wondered at the time how he was going to approach it. I had it in my head that it might be a certain way and he went another route. And Jesus, it was beautiful. I heard this completely foreign voice from North Carolina singing those words and they rang as true as if I was singing them. It really became his song by the end."

Make no mistake, David Francey has packed a lifetime into the past four years. Highlights? There's been a ton. Like 10,000 Ani DiFranco fans singing along to one of his songs at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival. Like CBC's Hockey Night in Canada playing his video for *Skating Rink* to a television audience of millions during the Hockey Heritage Classic between the Montreal Canadiens and the Edmonton Oilers. Like performing in a five-hundred-year-old mill with J.P. Cormier at the prestigious Tønder festival in Denmark. And clearly, he takes particular delight in the acknowledgments associated with his ever-increasing stockpile of accolades.

"The recognition of the work – the Juno and then the Penguin Eggs Awards – these things are huge and not exactly expected. These have proven to be pretty pivotal points. It's the kind of things, when they happen, they justify what you are doing."

33
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David Francey

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The French Connection

La Vache Qui Pleure (The Cow That Cries) follows almost twenty-five years after the release of Kate and Anna McGarrigles' wonderful initial French recording, Entre Lajeunesse Et La Sagesse. The title does not translate. Blame Philippe Tatartcheff – a onetime dilettante and now bovine benefactor. Tatartcheff wrote the lyrics on both discs. “I think Philippe’s lyrics were always too off the wall when he was younger. They were silly but now they are sadder and deeper,” Anna tells Roddy Campbell

Stanley had less trouble locating Livingstone. But then there was only one Livingstone and all of Africa to find him in.

There are two McGarrigles – Kate and Anna. And while one lives in Montreal and the other on a farm roughly sixty miles away, mountains crumbled and governments fell in the eternity it took to track them both to a hotel on the edge of Chicago.

“Kate McGarrigle, I presume.”

“Actually, it’s Anna. Kate’s gone for a walk.” Agghhh! Rufus and Martha’s mum returns soon enough, though. And together Kate and

Anna quickly set the world to rights. These sisters, you see, have just released *La Vache Qui Pleure (The Cow That Cries)* – a gorgeous, heart-warming disc sung almost entirely in French. It’s their first such undertaking since the exquisite *Entre Lajeunesse Et La Sagesse* (commonly known as *The French Record*) in 1980, which, incidentally, they have also just rereleased.

The French Record they made in the midst of a spat with their record company, Warner Bros., a mere four years after the release of their self-titled debut – an LP voted Album of the Year by the U.K.’s Melody Maker magazine. That award, probably the most prestigious of its kind in the world at the time, propelled them, albeit reluctantly, into the international spotlight.

While they have never effectively duplicated that first flush of success, they still built an impressive international reputation for their uniquely intimate and utterly, utterly compelling songwriting. Of course, the likes of Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris and Maria Muldaur covered their songs. And Nick Cave, Joan Baez and The Chieftains demanded collaborations.

Collaborations Kate and Anna do well. *The McGarrigle Hour*, their last disc, featured various extended family members – Kate’s former husband Loudon Wainwright III included – and such friends as Ronstadt and Harris. It picked up a Juno for Best Roots Traditional Album of the Year (Group), as did its predecessor *Matapedia*.

Well, *La Vache Qui Pleure* reunites Kate and Anna with Philippe Tatartcheff, who wrote most of the lyrics on *The French Record*, including the gorgeous *Complainte Pour Ste-Catherine (Lament For Saint Catherine)*, which also appears on their debut. It was the first song that Philippe wrote and Anna recorded. They put it together in 20 minutes and released it initially as the B side on a single about Montreal

Canadiens hockey legend Henri Richard.

“It was what, I suppose, you call a five-minute song,” says Philippe from his home in rural Quebec. “It was just one of those things – a line comes into your head. . . . It was written in 1973 – thirty-one years ago. In fact it was written around this time of year (February). I was working as a translator at the time. I wrote it in the office (laughs). I really like the record. It was who I was thirty-one years ago so there is a lot of memories involved in that.”

Anna: “So we thought, ‘That was easy.’ We would be songwriters and send these things out to people. Which we never actually did. But I think Philippe’s lyrics were always too off the wall when he was younger. They were silly but now they are sadder and deeper.”

Philippe Tatartcheff was born in Switzerland, but raised on a farm in Timmins, Ontario. He left there for McGill University in the late ‘60s, where he took a science class with Kate and later shared a flat with a common friend.

“We were all dilettantes,” says Anna.

Tatartcheff went on to study French literature at the Sorbonne in Paris before falling in love with cows and starting a dairy herd near Dunham, Quebec. Naturally enough, rural life features largely in his lyrics.

The title, *La Vache Qui Pleure*, came from incidental music Kate and Anna made for the French version of Toronto playwright Michael Healey’s, *The Drawer Boy*. That play was written about a

university student who moves in with two bachelor farmers and gets emotional about cows. Obviously, Tatartcheff added his bovine benevolence.

Few of his lyrics are available in English, though. And for good reason. "Some are untranslatable," he says. "You have to adapt. That's what a good translator does. They translate the image rather than the exact meaning from line to line because the words don't mean the same thing exactly. You can't translate a pun. I don't try. I might do something really dreadful."

"Only fools rush in where angels fear to tread," wrote Alexander Pope. But Pope never had the benefit of a decent Collins Dictionary. So, *Petite Annonce Amoureuse* (A Personal Ad) tells the bittersweet tale of a rural woman looking for a man one inch taller than herself. She smokes only good tobacco, likes mice, hates rats and scares little children.

"That was based on an article I found in an agriculture newspaper," says Philippe. "It was about a woman who was looking for a man who was five-foot-three, literally. I scratched my head and I said, 'This is so bizarre.' I just really wanted to do something with it. That came pretty quickly; it was fun."

Still, there's a certain sadness that permeates much of his work. It's easily recognisable on *Hurle le Vent* (*Howls The Wind*). As if Kate and Anna needed any encouragement. *Matapedia*, *Heart Like A Wheel*, *Talk To Me of Medicino*, *Go Leave*, classic heartbreakers one and all.

"I think that comes from our father," says Kate. "Our father used to sing some very sad songs. Although he was a very cheerful person, his music was sad."

On a more lighter note, the new disc also features two covers – one in English and one in French – of the William Blake poem *Ah Tournesol* (*Sunflower*), which was first set to music by The Fugs. The McGarrigles initially performed it in a series of tribute concerts organised around the tenth anniversary of the death of celebrated American musicologist and film maker Harry Smith. Smith had produced the Fugs debut in 1965.

Kate: "We were asked to be part of the Harry Smith extravaganza about three years ago. Everybody had to take either a song that he had collected or something he had worked on. And we chose the Fugs' *Ah Sunflower*, with their melody.

It was really good; it was really positive. So when we were putting together this record I asked Philippe to translate *Sunflower* into French. So when we sang the French lyrics. We said, 'Well, we'll try singing the English lyrics too'."

Yeah, but the Fugs?

Anna: "It was such an interesting song."

Kate: "One thing they had done, particularly in America, the folk music revival started in the late '50s, early '60s. At the time it was really underground, leftist, 'America needs some change. We love it but they made a lot of mistakes.' There's always been that leftist, kind of tearing down. That was very heavy in the folk thing. It wasn't all people like Doc Watson or The Carter Family. There were also people singing in urban areas and on campuses and they were doing The Fugs and Holy Modal Rounders' stuff, taking the American music and twisting it. And that was also good."

La Vache Qui Pleure also features Malvina Reynolds' classic commentary on urban sprawl, *Little Boxes* (*Petites Boîtes*) – a song Kate and Anna first recorded for *The Songs Of Pete Seeger: Vol. II – If I Had A Song*. Seeger, after all, is the very reason they began singing folk songs.

Born in the Laurentian village of St. Saviour-des-Monts – Kate in 1944 and Anna in 1946 – they first took piano lessons from local nuns. At home, their house reverberated with music. Their mother Gabry played violin and father, Frank, could hold a tune on piano, guitar, ukulele and zither. All of them sang.

By the late '50s the McGarrigles had moved to Montreal. And sometime in the very early '60s Pete Seeger came to the city to perform.

Kate: "We had gone with two guys. We had never heard of folk music at that point."

Anna: "That's not true. Joan Baez had put her first record out somewhere in there. Anyway she was already considered a pop musician. She was a huge star. I think she influenced a lot of young girls to take up the guitar. I count myself in there."

Kate: "Anyway, I wore my older sisters chic black dress and high-heels. I had bands on my teeth and curled my hair – I had no idea. To cut a long story short, we went to the concert. People were so relaxed. He made everybody laugh and

people were singing. It was so informal. I think that's what I liked about it. 'Oh my goodness, this looks like fun,' I said.

And so they rented Folkways records from the old record centre in Montreal. They favoured Appalachian and country blues records from the '20s and '30s. The appeal? "It was plaintive," says Kate. "There was real humanity in those old black and white photos of people. It was all that stuff. It wasn't one particular instrument or one particular song, it was because the records were old, you know. It kind of conjured up people's feelings. The banjo playing was angry. It was God-fearing, or whatever. It was emotional."

They took their first formative steps in local coffee houses with high school friend, Michelle Forest. That trio fell by the wayside when Kate and Anna joined traditional musicians Peter Weldon and Jack Nissenson as the Mountain City Four. Their ranks would later include Wade Hemsworth (*Black Fly Song*, *Log Driver's Waltz*) and multi-instrumentalist Chaim Tannenbaum. By the late '60s the Mountain City Four had pretty much run its course. Kate had graduated as an engineer, worked briefly, joined the Penny Lang Band for a couple of months, then took off for New York with guitarist Roma Baran. With Kate on piano and Roma on guitar, they gradually made inroads on the American folk circuit.

Anna, meanwhile studied art at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts. While she had no ambition to perform, she wrote continuously. The aforementioned *Complainte Pour Ste-Catherine* and *Heart Like A Wheel* came from this period. Kate followed with *The Work Song* and *Talk To Me of Medicino*. Roma quit the duo in 1971 but ended up producing records for the likes of Laurie Anderson. Kate married Loudon Wainwright III and stopped performing.

Other acts, however, began recording Kate and Anna's songs. They included Maria Muldaur who put *The Work Song* on her self-titled 1973 album, which featured the sultry smash hit *Midnight At The Oasis*. For her next, *Waitress At A Donut Shop*, she recorded Anna's *Cool River*. Therein lies a great tale, as older sister Jane relates in her sleeve notes for *The McGarrigle Hour*:

"Under the impression that Kate had written *Cool River*, Joe flew her to Los Angeles to play a piano track on the song. When he found out Anna ('You mean there's another one?') had written it with her friend Audrey Bean, he flew Anna out to California and they both did backing vocals on Maria's record. While there was tape running, Kate and Anna put down some of their songs and viola! A career was born."

Totally impressed, Boyd, who had produced many of the seminal British folk acts – Fairport Convention, Nick Drake, The Incredible String Band, John & Beverly Martyn – polished their demo, which helped them sign with Warner Bros. In the meantime, Linda Ronstadt made *Heart Like A Wheel* the title track of her new album. It sold over two million copies.

35
PENGUIN
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Feature



Photo By: Margaret Griffin

Philippe Tatartcheff



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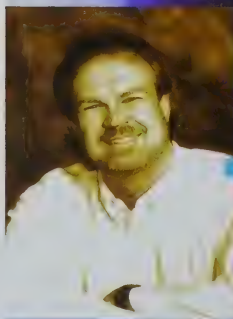
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Anna: "She loved the song. We're not sure how she got it. But the song was called *A Heart Like A Wheel* and I remember one night this woman called up. She said, 'Hello, I work for Linda Ronstadt. If you let us change the title of the song, we'd like to call the record *Heart Like A Wheel*.' 'Do anything you want'."

Kate and Anna McGarrigle came out in 1976. Besides such noted musicians as Little Feat's guitarist Lowell George – "he played one note" – and mandolinist David Grisman, it featured old Mountain City Four friend Chaim Tannenbaum on guitar and vocals and Wade Hemsworth contributed *Foolish You*. As it turned out, Warner Bros. hadn't a clue what to do with the McGarrigles. A fan who worked for rival Columbia Records certainly did and he sent their LP to the *Melody Maker* magazine in the U.K., where it became Album of the Year.

Anna: "I don't think we realized we had made anything special until we read the article in *Melody Maker*. In fact, as Kate likes to point out, it wasn't even our record company that told us about it; it was a guy from Columbia who sent the record over there."

Kate: "Warner Brothers didn't know what to do with it. But the guy from Columbia, he really liked it and he sent it to people in England."

"It was very exciting. All of a sudden there was this thing happening. We didn't even have a band at that time other than on the record and we had to

"He happened to be a Calvinist reared by the Christian Brothers. So there was a sense of not quite fitting in." "And when you're not fitting in you're standing back and your view of things is a little different."
– Kate and Anna on their lyricist Philippe Tatartcheff

put a group together and go and sing in London at the Victoria Palace Theatre."

Produced again by Joe Boyd, *Dancer With Bruised Knees* followed and proved somewhat of a disappointment. Likewise, *Pronto Monto*. But Kate and Anna returned to full-fledged glory in 1980 with the spartan yet enthralling *Entre Lajeunesse Et La Sagesse*. The title is typical Philippe Tatartcheff: a play on words. Vaguely, it means *Between Youth And Wisdom*. But *Lajeunesse* and *La Sagesse* are streets in Montreal.

"It was sort of a pun," says Philippe. "but it's about the streets."

Obviously, both Kate and Anna are fluent in French. So why do they turn to Tatartcheff for something they are quite capable themselves?

Kate: "It's hard to say. It might have worked if someone else came along or it might not have worked as well. For me, he has the most amazing vocabulary in French. He really uses the right words. He knows expressions, that are sometimes very old but they all have meaning. Nothing is ever vague. He's very correct with his usage of words"

Anna: "There's a song on the new record called *Ce Matin (This Morning)* – a very sad song – it's

about isolation. But in it he'll take some hackneyed English expression like 'return to sender', or, 'address unknown' and translate them into French. In French, they sound more fun."

Kate: "And fresher. There's a kind of an isolation thing too. I think it was the way we were brought up – one of a few English families in a French town. All our friends were Protestant because they were English speaking. We were raised Catholic. We were always the odd man out no matter where we went. And I think with Philippe, he obviously sensed that same kind of thing. He happened to be a Calvinist reared by the Christian Brothers. So there was a sense of not quite fitting in."

Anna: "And when you're not fitting in you're standing back and your view of things is a little different than if you are right in the middle."

Kate: "After we did our first French record a lot of people said, 'His lyrics are really weird. Why don't you get somebody else to write something? Maybe you'll have hits.' But we like weird."

continued on page 64

37

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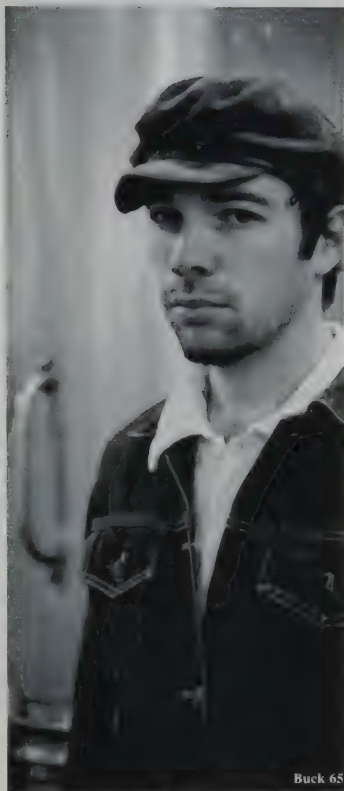
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Buck 65

39
PENGUIN
EGGS
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Buck 65

Hip-hop artists who frequently name-check Woody Guthrie and Folkways Records are scarce on the ground. But Buck 65—Richard Terfry to his mum—takes his two turntables and a microphone well beyond boundaries and genres. He has made several appearances at some of the major folk festivals across the country. And his latest release *Talkin' Honky Blues* features fiddle, pedal steel, flamenco guitar and such like as it explores the connections between the talking blues of Guthrie and hip-hop. It's impressively ambitious and stimulating and is currently nominated for a Juno as *Alternative Album of the Year*. Born and raised in rural Nova Scotia, and an occasional resident of Paris, France, Buck 65, prior to his latest swing through Western Canada, sat down for a chat with our Chris Connelly.

Is this your first interview with a folk-roots magazine?

You know what, I think that it probably is, and that makes me feel really good, actually. I've been trying to tell this to people forever, folk music is entirely where my head's been at for the last while and that's where I've been trying to find a home for myself.

You played the Calgary Folkfest last year. How do you think it went over with the audience, playing in that sort of scene?

Yeah, I played a handful of folk festivals over the summer, and it felt really good. I thought it worked really well. I mean the great thing about it is that events like that really seem to attract a lot of open-minded music people. Folk music is a genre that, I think, is more widely defined than a lot of other genres. If you look at the Calgary Folk festival there was everyone from Ani DiFranco, to Elvis Costello to, you know, Inuit throat singers, to myself playing there. But even if you look at the *Harry Smith Anthology* you're going to get everything there from blues, to kind of old country stuff, to Acadian music, to you know, you name it. It's a pretty broad category.

So would you say that *Talkin' Honky Blues* is more of an experiment into a traditional roots sound, or is it a direction you want to keep moving in?

It's a direction. I just think that's the way I've been evolving for a while. My earliest musical experiences were with folk music, growing up in rural Nova Scotia, that was the music I was surrounded by. I can remember being a kid, running around with my friends singing Woody Guthrie songs and stuff like that, and I've basically just come full circle. These days just about all I listen to is what you would call folk music. Woody Guthrie is certainly my hero and I definitely live by the *Anthology of American Folk Music*. I'm a subscriber and believer in Smithsonian-Folkways and try and buy up everything on their catalogue. That's the main fuel for my music these days. It's just the direction I seem to be going more and more into.

How much of a part does where you're from affect the music you play?

I think that's the biggest part. It plays a huge part in what I play even when I've spent time living in

other parts of the world. I worked on a lot of the last album while living in Paris, but it still inspired my most rural sounding record yet. It's an inescapable thing for me, living in a place like that. It just had a real indelible effect on me. It's not the sort of thing I can escape and I really miss it. Having traveled a lot the last few years has given me a new appreciation for where I come from, and the people there, and just the way things work.

A lot of the lyrics on *Talkin' Honky Blues* seem to be really bluesey, how did you go about writing lyrics for this album?

It's the same way I've always worked. The only differences would be in my own life. The real practical difference is that I travel almost all the time. It used to be that I would do my writing sitting in a window, or I'd just find a quiet little place where I live. I always had that luxury, but now it's rare. Now I do a lot of my writing sitting in a train station, or on a bus, or a situation like that when I have the odd down moment in the middle of traveling. I've had to discipline myself to be able to write in that kind of environment. It gives me access to a whole other source of inspiration. I think of my job now as being a professional people watcher, and frankly hanging out at a train station is a really great environment to do that sort of thing anyway. Watching people come and go and do their thing. And you can hear it in the music.

***Wicked and Weird* has gotten a lot of air play on corporate radio, it's become quite the hit, did you anticipate this?**

I sure didn't. It's pretty weird to me—psychedelic even. It's to the point where I've accidentally heard it, like where you're just walking along and you hear it. That's the first time that's ever happened in my life. There's a certain thrill you get out of that; I don't think anyone could deny that. But I had no expectations for that whatsoever and I never put any thought into writing singles. When all the material was done we figured out which one we should choose and maybe it stood out as an obvious choice for that sort of thing. There's two more singles to come from the

Buck 65



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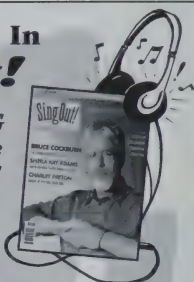
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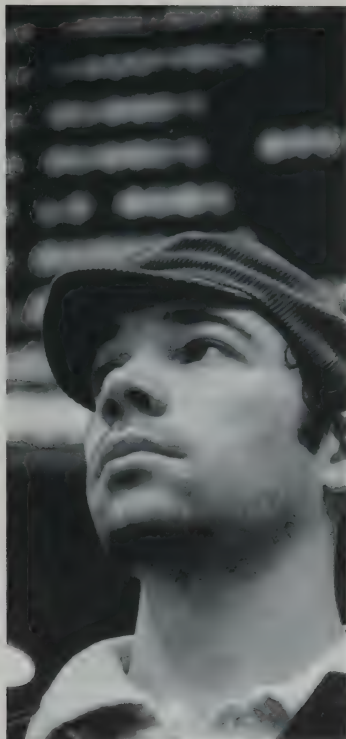
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album and it will be interesting to see how those go.

Q: What kind of folk-roots music have you been listening to lately?

Well, right now in my CD player I'm listening to an Alan Lomax collection that came out this year called the *Blues Songbook* which, to me, is the greatest record to come out this year. I've been listening to lots of blues, hang on (puts phone up to stereo and turns up this bluesy guitar riff) That's pretty much what it sounds like in my brain at all times. Lots of stuff—pretty much anything off the Smithsonian-Folkways label I'll buy in good faith, and Jimmy Rogers, Hank Williams, Bill Monroe, tons and tons of Woody Guthrie. The last two records I bought were Woody Guthrie records. Tom Waits sometimes. There's a few contemporary people here and there. There's some Lee Hazlewood records that I really like, Bob Dylan of course, but it's mostly old time stuff.

You recorded *Talking Honky Blues* with a live band. How did that work for you instead of using turn tables and production equipment in the studio?

The way I worked in the past was really limited by budget concerns and just being broke. There were certainly times when I was writing songs,

and I was hearing strings and other instruments in there, but being limited I was unable to do that. I don't think that there's anyone out there who would prefer, given the choice of everything, to work on a four track. Anyone who takes pride in their recording wants to get the best recording they can get. They don't want to be losing certain frequencies, you want all your ideas to be in there. Now I'm lucky enough to be in a situation where if I'm hearing strings or if I'm hearing a banjo I can go out and get a good banjo player and I'm lucky to have some really good friends who are great musicians whose ideas I have complete faith in. It hasn't been as quick as a transition as some people think because a lot of the people that are playing in my band now have been playing on my albums going back as far as *Man Overboard*. We've all been friends for a long time and have been playing with each other for a while now so it all came together in a rather organic way.

Growing up in Nova Scotia, how did you get into hip hop, is there even much of hip hop scene there?

Yeah, it's always been there. I think there were certain sounds kind of inherent in hip hop that I always had an affinity for because, like I said, when I was kid I was really into Woody Guthrie songs and he always dabbled in the talking blues a little bit. There were a lot of those weird old truck driving songs that had that same kind of spoken vocal delivery. Even songs like *The Devil Went Down to Georgia* by Charlie Daniels. I remember loving that song when I was a kid. I don't know what it was but I was always drawn to songs like that, so when I heard hip hop for the first time I was just like, 'Yeah, more of that kind of thing.' It was actually a babysitters boyfriend that introduced it to me for the first time. I use to ask my parents specifically for this one girl to come baby-sit me, it was my best friend's sister whom I thought was the most beautiful girl in the world.

Sometimes her boyfriend would come over. He was a DJ at a roller skating rink and he would show me hip hop records back in the

early, early days.

Do you still consider yourself a hip-hop artist?

Really I don't. I really don't know what to call myself. To call myself a musician or a proper songwriter might still be a bit of dubious claim. The reason why I say it's a dubious claim is because I'm not the kind of person that can stroll through a hotel lobby, sit down at a piano and entertain you for an evening, but I'm getting there. I'm building up my repertoire and learning the piano and guitar and using those instruments more and more as my main songwriting tools. I want to lay claim to those titles and hopefully some day I will. There is a situation where push comes to shove and you're forced to label your music as something and that tends to happen when you go through customs because they always ask what your job is. Then they find out I'm a musician so the next question always ends up being, 'What kind of music do you play?' And to be honest I always tell them folk music, for two reasons. One, because that's what I like to think of myself as, and two, you get way less hassle saying that than if you say rap or punk. They take it easier on you. I think folkies have a better rep'.

41

PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Interview

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The Wailin' Jennys

40 Days
Jericho Beach Music
JBM 0403

Good Lord! Can this really be the Wailin' Jennys? The same Wailin' Jennys who made such a disparately ragged, ad-hoc, six-song debut a year or so back?

While that initial recording showed flashes of true promise, it also had a threadbare, disjointed quality about it as Cara Luft, Nicky Mehta and Ruth Moody struggled to find common ground. But time has galvanized them into an inspired creative unit and their gorgeous harmonies have grown even more intricate. The proof on Moody's divine, *One Voice*, and the evergreen traditional heartbreaker, *The Parting Glass*, is nothing short of spectacular. Those wonderfully emotional voices of theirs lie somewhere between The Roches and the Silly Sisters but grounded in an absolute belief in their own abilities.

Their attachment to the tradition includes the mischievous *Saucy Sailor*. Obviously, Luft's pungent *Come All You Sailors* draws its inspiration from the same well. There's also a clever cover of John Hiatt's *Take It Down*. But their attempt at Neil Young's *Old Man* never quite puts enough distance between the original. A minor set back though, more than aptly eradicated by Nicky Mehta's brilliant, *Arlington*, which unearths a truly impressive new writing talent.

Immaculately produced by David Travers-Smith (Harry Manx & Kevin Breit) *40 Days* ought to place the Jennys on the same pedestal as the Be Good Tanyas. The first major Canadian folk-rocks recording of the year has officially arrived.

—By Roddy Campbell

Warsaw Village Band

People's Spring
World Village 468028

Polish traditional music isn't exactly widely known in the West, and even at home it would seem to be a dying art. But the Warsaw Village Band, a young seven-piece, is intent on keeping it alive. However, they don't want to simply re-create the music they've learned from older rural sources. What they aim to do is renew it, bringing in ideas from Jamaican dub, techno, and other areas, while keeping the music acoustic and pure. Along with the rough sound of fiddle and drum, they also employ the unusual traditional Polish fiddle with its distinctive sound, and the "white singing," which was a hallmark of shepherds almost a kind of keening. The tunes themselves might be simple and generally short but played with a fiery intensity, laid open and explored, like *To You Kasimira*, where the melody repeats like a mantra as a guest trumpeter blows wildly over the top, his phrasing altered by long use of a delay effect. At times the disc can almost sound primitive in its execution, but there's also plenty of power behind it, and the energy of youth. Add in a couple of remixes that keep the spirit of the music, but take it elsewhere, and you have a package where the ancient and modern glitter side by side.

—By Chris Nickson

The Swiftys

The Swiftys
Atomic Works Company
SWI 01

The Swiftys are a hot new Edmonton-based trio. The focus is singer/songwriter, multi-instrumentalist Shawn Swiftly Jonasson of Old Reliable fame, who dazzles with his deep, resonant vocals, formidable guitar playing, and his powerful songwriting and arranging skills. The material is country-based and brings to mind both Waylon Jennings and

Johnny Cash (if he rocked out a little more). Bass player Jody Thump Johnson (Wendell Donovan, House of Payne) and drummer Grant Stovetop Stovel (Sue Foley) provide rock solid back-up. Probably the strongest debut by an Edmonton band this critic has heard since Corb Lund. Recorded and mixed by Scott Franchuk at Riverdale Recorders it's also a great sounding disc. Jonasson gets all the stand-out details right on each song, too, from the chukka rhythm guitar of the opening track, through the dynamite strings of Patricia Gareau-Delisle and Cris Dirkson on *Spent Some Time*, to the closing Mexican-style trumpet of Aaron Keyes on *Adios*. Other must-have cuts are *Misty*, *The Only Daddy That'll Walk The Line*, and *Dealin' With The Deal*. Great songs and great playing. These boys have the stuff long careers are made of. Highly recommended.

—By Barry Hammond

The Del McCoury Band

It's Just the Night
MCM
001

How good is this? Canuck folkie David Francey, one of the most un-bluegrass artists you could find, gets one of his songs recorded by the ultra-cold Del McCoury. Talk about dying and going to heaven. Good on ya, David. OK, so Del change a lyric here and there. But what a coup! McCoury has a knack of finding great material from a range of sources, putting a bluegrass spin on just about anything. The highlight for my ears is the spooky *It's Just the Night*, by Pat McNerny and Van Eaton. Play this cut at Halloween. Darkness, shadows, bats, full moon. Scary, very scary. Francey's Mill Towns is cut No. 13 on this 14-track disc. In what may be a McCoury first, the CD does not contain one single song title with the word "blues" in it. Some things never change on a McCoury album, though, notably the impressive mandolin of son Ronnie McCoury, one of the best in the biz. The guy always manages to cook up some lightning-fast, take-your-breath-away instrumental. Here, it's *Hillcrest Drive*. It starts off in B and goes to, uh, sorry, got lost. On *My Love Will Night*, Ronnie uses a funky tuning to marvelous effect. And Jason Carter's fiddle, as usual, is stellar. Speaking of funky, the artwork in the CD is pure Sixties. Who'd-a-thunk-it? A Jimi Hendrix acid trip on a bluegrass album.

—By Bob Remington

Kiran Ahluwalia

Beyond Boundaries
Kiran Music
KM-2003

Beyond Boundaries is a collection of ghazals and Punjabi folk songs from Toronto's Kiran Ahluwalia. It is an immediately likable mix of Indian and Pakistani music that lies somewhere between those countries' folk and classical traditions, with hints of Western popular music. Although all songs are in Punjabi and Urdu, the

English translations in the liner notes convey some of the magic but are almost unnecessary—just revel in the glories of Ahluwalia's voice—no translation needed. And as if her formidable vocal talent were not enough, Ahluwalia also plays tanpura and composes most of the musical settings for the ghazals. One favourite, *Saagiya*, opens with flamenco-tinged guitar before it morphs into a solid Indian groove, anchored in the percussion of Ravi Nairmpally and Alan Heatherington, and the repetitive lines of Mustafa Zaidi's sombre meditation on the 'pleasures' of drink. This contemplative mood is typical of the ghazals and their deep philosophical kick. "What is the worry if I cannot find God, when my own footprints cannot be found?" closes *Main Dhoondta Hoon*, and "What value are my knowledge and good deeds if this labour is left behind when my soul leaves," from *Kina Nere*. Ahluwalia's intricate vocal acrobatics are the perfect match for this poetry, as is the musicianship, and aside from the ever-so-slightly artless title, *Beyond Boundaries* is an unalloyed delight.

— By Richard Thornley

Pete Morton

Swarthmoor
Harrowtown
HARC0044

Sightings of Pete Morton in these parts remain rarer than glimpses of Garbo. A two-date stop in Alberta in February marked his first and only appearances in Canada in a dozen years. Accompanied with a new recording, too, *Swarthmoor*. Known throughout Britain for his dramatic reinterpretations of traditional ballads and potent, thought-provoking, songwriting, Morton remains a superbly distinctive talent. By my reckoning, only Jez Lowe and Rory McLeod climb to such startling heights.

Swarthmoor really has everything: humour (*Six Billion Eccentrics*), politics (*The Government Wall*), sentimentality (*The Luckiest Man*), optimism (*Goodbye To Oil*) and history (*Naseby Field*). And if there was a better folk song written last year than *The Shepherd's Song* — a tribute to English rural poet John Clare, 1793-1864, — then I haven't heard it. Yet the emotionally-charged *The Two Brothers* — a plea for peace between the Israelis and Palestinians written in the guise of a spat between two naughty little boys — will no doubt grab all the headlines. Simply recorded with just voice and guitar, *Swarthmoor* ought to generate a legion of admirers for yer man, Morton

— By Roddy Campbell

Greg Brown

Honey in the Lion's Head
Trailer Records
TR0035

Hands up those who love Greg Brown's voice. Hands up those who love American traditional music. Well, have I got an album for you.

Greg Brown is master songwriter. Who knew he was such a great interpreter of traditional music. In



this collection, produced with his pal, Bo Ramsey, he has delivered an almost flawless record.

The songs featured apparently came from "the soundtrack of his youth". Simply delivered and sung in true home-spun fashion, Al Murphy, Bob Black, and Bo Ramsey are superb in backing Greg's dark whiskey voice with the right smooth touches on fiddle, mandolin banjo and guitar. Iris Dement and Greg's daughters Pieta and Constie make lovely backing vocal appearances.

Who Killed Cock Robin is much more than a kid's song in Greg's hands and his *Down in the Valley* is filled with dark despair and desperation as is *I Never Will Marry*. The album ends with a couple of rousing in comparison gospel tunes.

Jim Garland's *I Don't Want Your Millions Mister* is beautifully done but seems out of place with the 10 traditional songs, unlike the only other written tune, Greg's *Ain't No One Like You*.

All in all, one terrific album from the always interesting Mr. Brown. *Honey in the Lion's Head* is a keeper.

— By les siemieniuk

Kate & Anna McGarrigle

La Vache Qui Pleure
Tribu
TRICD7221

The matriarchs of the distinguished McGarrigle/Wainwright clan return to fine form on their second French language disc. Their first, 1980's *Entre Lajeunesse et la Sagesse* was a sweetly sung gem, and *La Vache Qui Pleure* (The Cow That Cries) is every bit its equal. This album is self-produced, and it lacks the sonic gloss of such earlier albums as *Matapaedia* and *Heartbeats Accelerating* — a good thing, as it's those sublime voices and harmonies that are given their rightful place centrestage. Quebecois lyricist Philippe

Tartacheff wrote virtually all the material with the sisters, and he contributes a poetical recitation on *Hurle Le Vent* (*Howls The Wind*). Rather a pity there is no English translation of the lyrics here for those of us cursed with just a rudimentary grasp of the language. Not too many big name guests featured this time, though Martha Wainwright makes some effective contributions and ace slide guitarist Michael Jerome Browne is featured on final track *The Fuggs' Ah Sunflower* (lyrics by William Blake), the only English tune here; although, it's also sung in French. A cover of the Malvina Reynolds classic, *Little Boxes* (*Petites Boites* — recorded for the Pete Seeger tribute *Seeds*) is a nice touch. Those folk fans with fond memories of early McGarrigle Sisters albums will find plenty to enjoy here.

— By Kerry Doole

Kate Rusby

Underneath the Stars
Pure Records
PRCD012

Underneath the Stars is a Kate Rusby record and if you're familiar with her other work to date then it will hold few surprises: perhaps a touch more pop, a bit of banjo on a couple of songs, a snare drum shuffle on *Let Me Be*, some nice brass arrangements courtesy of the Grimethorpe Colliery Band, but otherwise pretty much the same old same old. That's not a bad thing though and the album definitely has some stellar tracks. It opens with *The Good Man*, a hilarious tale of a cuckold who consistently overlooks his wife's flagrant abuses of their relationship, perhaps knowingly. *Cruel* is a lights-out story of estranged lovers, a real tear-jerker. And *Let Me Be* has another great, catchy chorus that'll lodge in your brain for days. There's also a nice reworking of Nic Jones' *The Blind Harper*. Much of the rest of the disc is very pretty, although slight at points, and the musician-ship is impeccable as always: Ian Carr, John McCusker, Andy Cutting, et al. Rusby writes an increasing amount of the music herself and gets another nod for that. It's a beautiful record, heartfelt, graceful and serene, tarnished only slightly by the familiarity of its sound.

— By Richard Thronley.

Eliza Carthy

The Definitive Collection
Highpoint Recordings
HPO 6005

This collection on Topic's new offshoot label includes selections from Eliza's solo CD's, her recordings with Waterson Carthy and The Kings of Calicut, and one each from Ollie Knight's *Shining Bright* and *The Songs of Lal & Mike Waterson*. (Obviously there's no reference to the pop-oriented *Angels and Cigarettes* album she recorded for Warner Brothers.)

As such it is a good overview of her career so far, there is something a little absurd about making a definitive collection when she obviously has so much more music to make.

Things get off to a snappy start with a fine version of *The Light Dragoon* with mam and dad joining her on the lusty choruses. The cuts from *Red Rice* show off her ability to blend the contemporary with the old, the original with the traditional. *Greenwood Laddie/Mrs Capron's Reel/Tune* features groovy bass, cool brushed snare and fine fiddling from the lass herself. Other highlights are the atmospheric *Fisher Boy* which she sings against plain accordion backing with fine layered vocal overdubs on the chorus, a funky take on *Billy Boy/The Widow's Wedding* and *Go From My Window* with its delicate wah guitar and ghostly Wild West harmonica intro that sputters into a laid back dance groove. My personal favourite is *Blow the Winds* with Eliza singing and playing fiddle and djembe which is followed by the beautiful melody *The Game of Draughts* which was co-written with Ed Boyd who plays bouzouki on

the track.

If you are daft enough not to own any of the CD's that this collection comes from then now's your chance to get out there and redeem yourself.

— By Tim Readman

The King's Musicians: Royalist Music of Buganda-Uganda

Recordings & Text by Peter Cooke & Klaus Wachsmann
Topic Records TSCD925

In amongst all the world music poseurs, wannabes and has-beens, what a pleasure to come across this authentic example of a distinct cultural sound. The passion, the musicianship, the soul of this recording should shake you on every level. It's just fabulous to hear.

As Peter Cooke and Klaus Wachsmann, the authors of the text and the recording, explain: "The music on this CD is performed mostly by professionals who once practiced their art in the palace of Edward Mutesa II..." They fled in 1966 after Ugandan Prime Minister Milton Obote dissolved the kingdom.

The polyrhythmic drumming and heartfelt singing is remarkably complex. The authors identify cyclical units of, for instance, six claps per cycle in multiples designed to match the "rate of the syllabic flow of the texts."

What does that mean? Well, it results in an absolutely dazzling display of virtuoso musicianship. Every bit as wonderful is the comprehensive explanatory text Cooke and Wachsmann have written to go with the music. It is a work of true scholarship. To listen to *The King's Musicians* is to hear the authentic sound of Africa.

— By Charles Mandel

James Keelaghan

Then Again
Jericho Beach
JBM0401

Taking a page from Kate Rusby's scrapbook, *Then Again* revamps James Keelaghan's older songs initially recorded on albums between *Timelines* and *A Recent Future*. Obviously not a Best Of... package, it still offers such indispensable standouts as *Jenny Bryce*, *Fires Of Calais*, *Cold Missouri Waters* and the fabulously compelling *Hillcrest Mines* — surely one of the greatest songs ever written in Canada about draconian labour conditions. Oddly enough though, he left out the equally stirring *Small Rebellion* for the more whimsical *Orion* and *I Would I Were*. Yet it

is a real treat to re-discover the uplifting *Stand Your Ground*, which fully deserves its growing status as a picket and protest line favourite. By and large the structural changes are minimal — an update to a lyric or two, a bit of spit and polish around the arrangements, a tweaking of tempo. While an inevitable sense of trading water surrounds such projects, the quality of this updated retrospective can't be denied. For those who discovered Keelaghan through recent recordings, *Then Again* covers the essential bases.

— By Roddy Campbell

Calasaig

Merchants' City
Lazy Mist
BKDCD107

What better way to start the New Year than with the skirl of the pipes? Heady stuff I know but I'm sure this album will help kick out any remaining cobwebs you may have. Starting off with a set of tunes *The Pullet/Sandy*



James Keelaghan

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"COME ALONG CARMELITA"
TOP 5 of 2002... wonderful songwriting... and the man knows how to sing them.....

Jack Barriac, Southern Radio, WRT, Melbourne, Victoria



Keep the Change

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Duff Calasaig prove they aren't the shy, retiring type and although I wasn't expecting it I'm glad to hear that lead vocalist Kirsten Easdale has an attacking edge which more than balances the band's powerhouse backing. In fact, the performances by the rest of the members Celine Donoghue (fiddle), Keith Easdale (pipes), Andy Webster (guitar) and Keith Johnston (cittern) are dynamic and spirited – just the way I like it! As well as established traditional favourites such as *The Road To Drumlethan* and *The Bonnie Light Horseman* the members of the band all take a part in contributing new tunes and songs and the diversity in their subject matter makes for interesting reading (and listening). Whether ripping it up with the banjo driven *Dinny O'Brien's/The Shortcut* or relating the tale of *The Lost Gardeners Of Heligon* Calasaig are a refreshingly lively group whose reputation should see them at the top of the tree. Finally, and this is by no means meant to detract from their efforts, comparisons are inevitable and for those of a certain age I'd hedge a bet with Kentigern which I hope will be seen as a compliment. If you hadn't guessed it already the album comes highly recommended.

– By Pete Fyfe

Martyn Joseph

Whoever it was that brought me here will have to take me Home.

Pipe Records
PRITCD 007

While Martyn first came to Calgary only three years ago, he has made his presence felt as a live performer. Blessed with a powerful emotional power, a conscience, a charming personality, and tons of stage presence, he has built a loyal and adoring audience here. I've seen him in concert at least five times and he just seems to get better with each outing.

This is, I think, his ninth CD, and he's getting better in this medium as well. Simply arranged and recorded with his voice and songs taking center stage. Phil Beers from Show of Hands does tasty work on guitar, mandolin and flute, as does Amy Wadge on some sweet backing vocals. And there are some gems. *Wake me Up* is a sterling example of melding a melody and lyrics. *Just like the Man Said* is a terrific and could have been a cliché-ridden song of – once again – love is the answer but is lifted by inspired lyrics.

History will slaughter us

That's my opening line

Some things need to said

Can't go to bed and just shut it down. “

It's the Martyn you've come to know and love – and then some – delivered with honest emotion and genuine feeling. As always, amidst the melancholy, there is hope in Martyn's songs and in his voice. That's what's makes him so compelling.

It's not quite perfect as Martyn slips into cliché earnest goddess worship in *This Being Woman* (sounds like a sensitive boy wrote it in hope of getting lucky) but other than that tiny misstep, the album is stunning.

– By les siemieniuk

Josh Ritter

Hello Starling

Signature Sounds Recordings
SIG 1280

Who can you believe these days? Ireland's Hotpress Readers' Poll names Josh Ritter No. 1 international male singer and songwriter. Jacket notes to his latest recording, *Hello Starling*, say that Joan Baez is Ritter's personal friend. But you like to hear for yourself, right?

At first blush, his husky, whisper-singing, vocals are just a sexier shade of Dylan. His guitar is Dylan redux. But Sam Kassirer's Hammond and Wuritzer organs are Booker T., baby. These back-ups are moody, enhancing, not blaringly intrusive. Ritter's melodic melanges linger, hauntingly, like childhood memories. The good ones blend with the bad till you cannot separate them.

This songwriter's greatness will ultimately fix on his allegorical, highly literate, lyrics. There is also wit and freshness here. The CD title derives from a line in *Snow Is Gone*. 'When I listen, I hear Spring. The birds have returned, the ones we love with ones we do not.' And I believe the press clippings. But you will need to hear this one for yourself.

– By Les Pearson

Cory Danyluk and Sarah Card

Jaybird

Independent
DCCD001

This is the second release from Edmonton-based duo Cory Danyluk and Sarah Card. They have been together for a “few” years according to their biography and – you know – they make a swell team.

From the first play, the most obvious and pleasing thing about this album is that it has energy and a good spirit. Cory and Sarah obviously like playing together and enjoyed doing this recording. You can hear it. Artists with longer careers could learn about sounding interested in their material from these two.

Jaybird is twelve songs penned and sung by Danyluk with backing vocals and violin by Card. Cory has a few things to say and says them in an original and interesting fashion with Sarah filling in the gaps. Cory's vocals suit his poetic, although at times over-written, lyrics. Judicious editing could have made some of these songs wonderful rather than just good. I gave up lyrically halfway through a few songs, 'cause they're just too long for the subject matter. But this is an album full of promise and its spirit and sense of wonder won me over in the end.

– By les siemieniuk

Geoff Berner

We Shall Not Flag or Fail,

We Shall Go On To The End

Black Hen Music
BHCD 10982

The voice? Beautiful, powerful, heart-full. The music? Superb sensibilities rendered enthusiastically and dynamically on the lovely Estella (his ac-

cordion). The lyrics? Genius. Berner manages to combine history with zeitgeist to create an album that is both timely and timeless.

With risqué songs like *We All Gotta Be a Prostitute Sometimes*, *Porn Queen Girlfriend*, and *A Settling of Accounts*, Berner is no mild mannered folkie who can easily be ignored. His attitude is 100 percent punk at times, in the style of one Dan Bern (who is, incidentally, thanked on the album: perhaps they are long lost cousins?). Yet Berner's sweet, tender side shines through in the melodic *Clown & Bard* and the traditional-esque *Iron Grey*, sung respectively with Be Good Tanyas' Frazee Ford and Samantha Parton. These unlikely love songs contain such wonderful imagery that we can almost see ourselves as a party in the relationship.

Whether he is writing a love song or a social commentary, Berner always infuses the right amount of subtle humour to keep the listener's blood flowing.

As far as I'm concerned, Geoff Berner is one of the best male artists in this country. You might feel the same way if cheeky-yet-heartfelt-acordion-punk-pop is your thing.

– By Mary Beth Carty

Galitcha

Satrang

Music@galitcha.com
GAL1111

The band's name means tapestry and the album's title stands for seven colours. Got that? Yes, Galitcha is another Canadian world music band offering a ragu – or should that be raga – of influences plucked from the global stew. Hey, mix some Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu singing with Celtic, North American Folk, Indian and Chinese



Cory Danyluk and Sarah Card

45
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Recordings

Classical and African and what do have? Galitcha, apparently. So the Ottawa-based trio proposes on its all-too-forgettable debut. This is how we end up with Linsey Wellman tooting her saxophone over Ravi Naipally's overpowering tabla drumming. That probably goes a long way toward explaining why the band's recording is self-published. They're not fooling anyone, although I was mightily annoyed to mistake the CD for a Peter Gabriel Real World project because of Galitcha's use of a rainbow band of colour on the recording's spine. It doesn't get much more mediocre than this.

— By Charles Mandel

Washboard Hank and The Country Squires

Hoorah For Washboard Hank
A Major Label
AML004

Master of the Fallopian Tuba — a one-inch PCV pipe attached to a kitchen sink — Washboard Hank spent the last four years

touring with Fred Eaglesmith and has played on TV on everything from W5 to Mr. Dressup. Hank can write satirical novelty songs like *The Donut Shops of Ontario*, *Red Dog Ray* and the *I.P.A.*, or *The Marmora Pig* (complete with

snorts and pig grunts) or sensitive songs about the destruction of the Canadian railways (*Train Yards*). He plays not only the washboard and tuba but an array of bells, whistles, license plates, duck calls, as well as the more traditional banjo, kazoo, and Dobro. He covers country, rockabilly, boozy blues, television themes, and oom-pah music and is a cross between Spike Jones, Stompin' Tom Connors, and Dan Hicks. Backed by the likes of Lance Loree (Junior Gone Wild and The Alien Rebels) on guitars and Dobro, and Ronnie Hayward and Mike McCafferty on stand-up bass, this disc is fun stuff — a rollicking, laugh-filled, romp through roots-based genres for the musically eccentric, who don't want to take their life or music too seriously.

— By Barry Hammond

Various Artists

Africa Straight Ahead
Heads Up
HUCD 3079

Africa Straight Ahead, largely a collection of African jazz artists, doesn't — as one might suppose — fuse African rhythms with a jazz sensibility. Rather, much of what's played here is the sort of neo-traditionalist jazz sound Wynton Marsalis espouses. It's all performed competently, if cold-bloodedly, enough. Of course, a couple of exceptions may be found. Listen particularly for pianist

Paul Hammer's driving Naivasha, with its almost marching beat that fractures into polyrhythms. —
By Charles Mandel

The Wayfaring Strangers

This Train
Rounder
116610528-2

This is the second release from the band that is the brainchild of Boston-based violinist/composer Matt Glaser whose mission is in Glaser's own words to 'Play all styles of music, all of the time'. Like the first album, there are strong elements of bluegrass, klezmer and jazz but this time there are also tunes from the black gospel music tradition. Now in theory none of this should really work but it does! Throughout, the CD is laced with twists turns and great musical surprises. One of the highlights is the title track that veers off into crazy jazz influenced solos on guitar, trombone, clarinet and fiddle underpinned by Tony Trischka's banjo groove. *Columbus Stockade Blues* features what Glaser calls 'our patented transition from straight ahead bluegrass to contemporary modal jazz'. The band possesses three wonderful singers in Tracy Bonham, Ruth Ungar and Aoife O'Donovan each with her own distinctive style. There is an exuberance in the playing that comes from musicians obviously enjoying themselves immensely. The Wayfaring Strangers are smashing the barriers that divide music into genres and are having great fun doing it. Highly recommended.

— By Tim Readman

Genticorum

Le Galarneau
Genticorum
Genti202

As we keep remarking in these pages, there's so much great music coming out of Quebec these days, from groups both young and older: Les Chauffeurs à Pied, La Bottine Souriante, Entourloupe, Le Vent du Nord, Les Charbonniers de l'Enfer, Perdu L'Nord, La Volée d'Castors, and the list goes on. Well, just when you think you've

heard them all, along comes someone new to confound that opinion. Genticorum are the latest, a young trio with a traditionally-rooted sound and energy to burn. Pascal Gemme (fiddle, voice, and podorythmie), Yann Falquet (guitar, Jew's harp, voice, clochette), and Alexandre de Grosbois-Garand (flute, electric bass, vocals) are the group, and *La Galarneau* is their first album. Yet despite their age and lack of numbers, their music has a striking depth



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Natalie Merchant: Friend of Pete Seeger

and richness. They include some a capella songs, boldly tackle *Le 25 de Mai* (previously rendered in classic form by Marchand, Ornstein, and Miron on *Le Bruit Court Dans La Ville*), throw in a nod to la Famille Soucy with the electric bass on *Cyclone*, and also show themselves to be capable composers of their own (as with *Baldaqin* which opens the disc). At times the music seems coloured with a strong Irish influence (and possibly also a Scandinavian influence, as on the fiddle solo that opens *Le 25 de Mai*). The whole thing has an amazing cohesiveness, sense of humour, and maturity; essential listening for anyone interested in Canada's most vital musical tradition.

— By Richard Thomley

Kate Maki

Confusion Unlimited
Independent

This CD comes from pretty much the same team that brought you Kathleen Edwards and Jim Bryson's *The North Side Benches* (reviewed elsewhere in this publication). Kate Maki was raised in Sudbury, went to school in Halifax and is now a resident of Ottawa. According to *Confusion Unlimited* was inspired by "crappy stuff, mainly to do with love, loss and death" which is abundantly evident in her lyrics. There are traces of Lucinda Williams, Eliza Gilkyson and Mary Gauthier in her acoustic guitar driven sound and her country tinged voice. She has an assured confidence to her sound which is quite mellow but never wimpy. The material is well supported by her studio players which include Jim Bryson on guitar and Kathleen Williams' producer (and the producer of this disc too) Dave Draves on bass. Nothing startlingly original here but a good solid rootsy performance nonetheless. One to watch.

— By Tim Readman

Big Bill Morganfield

Blues In The Blood
Blind Pig
BPCD 5086)

Imagine life in the shadow of a giant and you have some idea how many cards are stacked against the possibility of Big Bill having a voice of his own in the blues. This chip off the old block has certainly had his troubles navigating around his father's legacy but *Blues In The Blood* finally grants him his own lease on life. Eleven tracks are Big Bill originals; one is a Muddy cover. Based on his strengths as a songwriter alone, Big Bill has set the record straight as to who's doing what — his grasp of the Chicago blues sound is beyond genetic. His deep-dish baritone vocals and stinging slide guitar. Back-to-back tracks like *Left Alone* and *Trapped* are strong personal statements and stand-out examples of Morganfield's obvious gifts. Acoustic runs through *Whiskey* and *Feel Like Dyin'* demonstrate an innate Delta connection as they underline his grasp of the basics of the blues. The guitars of Jimmy Vivino and Brian Bisesi add greatly to the atmosphere across this smooth, polished production. Yet it is Morganfield's newfound ability to stand alone and be counted that gets the most attention here. And much-deserved attention it is.

— By Eric Thom

Pete Seeger and Friends

Seeds: The Songs of Pete Seeger Vol. III
Applesseed
APR CD 1072

This is the final part of the trilogy that included *Where Have All The Flowers Gone* and the wonderful *If I Had A Song*. It's divided into two discs, one being Pete and Friends, the other titled Friend of Pete. On the first disc, Pete, with surprisingly strong vocals for a man of 84 years, is joined by his grandson Tao Rodriguez-Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Anne Hills, and the dangerous trio of Ani DiFranco, Billy Bragg, and Steve Earle. Together they perform one of the collections strongest tracks, a reworking of *Bring Them Home* (If You Love Your Uncle Sam), retrofitted to comment on the war in Iraq instead of the Vietnam War. The duet with Anne Hills results in the haunting *Flowers Of Peace*. They've also trotted out some previously unrecorded material, including *Trouble At The Bottom*, *Sower Of Seeds*, and the tribute *Take It From Dr. King*.

The second disc features some performers that collaborated on the earlier volumes: Dick Gaughan, who does a very different version of *Bells Of Rhymin'* than the Byrds; Magpie; and Tom Paxton. Newcomer Natalie Merchant is the only one that really shines; her version of *Which Side Are You On* (written by Florence Reece) over-shadows pretty much everyone else on this disc, most of who sound like they're going through the motions of paying tribute to a folk legend. In fact, this album is by far the weakest of the three. It sounds as though they were either in a hurry to get

this out while Pete was still alive, or scraping the barrel for material to fill out the trilogy. Either way, it could have benefited from some careful paring of dead weight (Martin Simpson and Jessica Radcliffe's dreadful *Turn! Turn! Turn!*).

Unless you are carefully cultivating a complete Pete Seeger library, invest your money in the much superior volumes one and two instead.

— By Shawna Biomante

Peggy Seeger

Heading Towards Home
Applesseed
APR CD 1076

Peggy Seeger, a member of the North American musical Seeger family, a singer of traditional Anglo-American songs, activist and wife of the late Ewan MacColl. She has been steeped in the "folk Music of the last 60 years on both sides of the Atlantic. She says about this new album, "I have sung these songs for 68 years and I cannot imagine being without them." Well after hearing this CD, neither can I. This is a wonderfully lovely and touching album — one that sits squarely in the middle of any definition of folk music you may subscribe to. A great folk album in the best sense of the word. Old traditional songs like *A Girl of Constant Sorrow*, *John Gilbert is the Boat*, and *Jackie Rover* are sung from the heart with sparse "folksy" instrumentation — a banjo here, a guitar there, an occasional melodeon and auto harp, with some great backing from sons, a daughter, and friends.

Heading for Home is a great example of traditional Anglo and American folk music delivered by one of its greatest practitioners. It's great to hear Ms. Seeger in such fine form.

— By les siemieniuk

Alasdair Roberts

Farewell Sorrow
Rough Trade
RTRADECD094

Alasdair Roberts' weedy and wispy voice snakes from this recording like the spirit of village mystics past, channeling trials and tribulations, at times their hope, at other times their sadness and regret. Folk rock without the blunting electrification and stagnant clichés, his music drifts like fall leaves on a stream, muted and serene. And despite some credited nods to the traditional music of the British Isles, for the most part this is a completely original enterprise. The skeleton of vocals and guitar is fleshed out with bass, drums, mandolin, melodica, bells, and piano, often to unsettling effect, by colleagues from Roberts' former band, The Appendix.

Out. But it's the songs that take centre-stage and show Roberts to be a man in love with language and the subtle play of words on his tongue. In the darkly humorous *Down Where The Willow Wands Weep* he sings: "I had a daughter and a son,

47

PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Recordings

but in the undergrowth I left them." And in *Slowly Growing Old* the world is a "little light and a little shade" measured by "compass and astrolabe". Elsewhere he is a young man inclined to seek pleasure, a poacher pleading for his life after being caught by the game-keeper, and a poetic declaimer on love and life, never so much as saying farewell to sorrow as reveling in the sharp clarity of that state. It's a rare beastie that should satisfy wan indie obsessives and jaded folk elders equally. Classic.

— By Richard Thornley

Lucy Kaplansky

The Red Thread

Red House
RHR CD 166

From her solo work to her collaboration with Dar Williams and Richard Shindell in CRY CRY CRY, Lucy has a great track record as both a songwriter and as an interpreter. She continues this on *The Red Thread*, her fifth solo album, with six original tunes and four great covers of songs

by James McMurtry, Buddy Miller, Dave Carter and Bill Morrissey.

This is a terrific album. Her voice is in fine form, leading a tight folk-rock band featuring simple yet rich arrangements. And there is some fine back up vocal work from Richard Shindell, John Gorka, Eliza Gilkyson and Jonatha Brooke.

The original songs here were written in the aftermath of New York's Sept 11th ground zero and the coming into her life of her new adopted daughter. They reaffirm the will of the human spirit and the joy of family without being maudlin or gratuitous.

The Red Thread is a wonderful listening experience from a solid gifted artist with a lot to say, both lyrically and musically. It is a poignant, heartfelt, and beautiful collection of songs and perhaps her best work to date.

— By les sienieniki

North Cregg

Summer At My Feet

Greentrax
CDTRAX250

This is North Cregg's third album and it represents a quantum leap over their earlier recordings. The musicianship of old remains intact, production polished to a fine sheen by Capercaillie's Donald Shaw, but the big change this time around is the replacement of John Neville with singer Fiona Kelleher. While Neville's songs were strong, they always sat uncomfortably alongside the full-on attack of North Cregg's approach to their *Sliabh Luachra* repertoire. There's something about Kelleher that seems much closer to the spirit of the band. Maybe it's the female voice, maybe just the song selection (Neville used to write a fair number of the songs himself, Kelleher has wisely chosen songs from other sources, both original and tradi-

tional). Whatever. It works. So, with *Summer At My Feet* we are treated to five songs and seven sets of tunes. They're all great, but highlights include the kinetic *Pitchfork Reel* (from Prince Edward Islander, Megan Bergeron), the outrageous danceability of their sets of slides and polkas, and the unabashed optimism of the two Ger Wolfe songs chosen by Kelleher (one of which lends its title to the disc). The whole effort has incredible energy, but also, strangely, much more sensitivity than the previous records. I love it.

— By Richard Thornley

Various Artists

Live Recordings From

The William Kennedy Piping Festival
Independent
WKPFCD

This CD is a compilation of the first 10 years of the William Kennedy Piping Festival, hosted by the Armagh Pipers Club in Northern Ireland. It commemorates the life of the blind 18th century piper and pipe maker, thought by some to be the inventor of the uilleann pipes.

The album is a diverse collection of pipers – uilleann, Scottish Highland, Scottish small, Northumbrian small, Northumbrian half-long, Welsh, Galician and Sardinian.

The performances are of the highest quality ranging from the wonderfully virtuosic to the absolutely unbelievable. Each performer is obviously one of the top proponents of their instrument.

The uilleann pipes are well represented with names like Tommy Keane, Cillian Valley (Lunasa), Robbie Hannon and Tianran O' Duinnchinn (Dorsa). It's interesting to compare the differing styles of the pipers and nice to hear liberal use of the regulators.

The Scottish Highland and Scottish small are well looked after by Gordon Duncan, Robert Watt and Allan McDonald with Gordon Duncan's high A-thumb falling under the 'how does he do that category?' Kathryn Tickell displays her usual level of superb musicianship on the Northumbrian small pipes with the descriptive rain drop hornpipe, a.k.a. *Bill Charlton's Fancy*, and the beautifully haunting *Westoe*. Jose Manuel Tejedor playing the Gaita Asturiana absolutely blew away the audience with incredibly fast fingering on the tunes *Salton/Floteau De Remis*.

The solo performance that really caught my ear was Sardinian musician Luigi Lai playing the mouth blown, triple pipe called the Luaneddas. This is a bagpipe without the bag, one chanter playing melody, one chanter playing counterpoint and a single drone. The tone is rock-steady, no small feat since it requires circular breathing.

Then, of course, there are the duets, with a blistering Cillian Valley and Tianran O' Duinnchinn on uilleann pipes with drones and regulators coming on and off at different parts, wonderful stuff! The Northumbrian small pipe/Galician gaita galle-ga duet of Kathryn Tickell and Anxo Lorenzo played a tricky but amazing pair of Galician tunes

It was also nice to hear one of the best pipe bands



Lucy

in the world – Field Marshall Montgomery from Ireland – demonstrate their superb musicality and ensemble playing. I would have liked to hear the performers introduce and maybe talk a bit about their instruments or tunes just prior to their performance. It would have really added to the recording. But this is a very small quibble on an otherwise superb package.

— By Rob Menzies

Various Artists

Livin', Lovin', Losin': Songs of the
Louvain Brothers
Universal
B000458-02

No tribute to the music of the Louvain Brothers would be successful without superb harmonies. Of all the great brother duets of the '40s and '50s, the vocal blend of Ira and Charlie Louvin had no equal. On this, probably the best country album of the year, producer Carl Jackson nails it, finding the right people with the right voices matched to the right Louvain Brothers material. Hell, the pairing of James Taylor with Alison Krauss on *How's the World Treating You* is worth the price of the disc alone, not to mention Jon Randall with Patty Loveless on *Are You Teasing Me*, Marty Stuart and Del McCoury on *Let Us Travel*, *Travel On* and Pamela Brown Hayes with Kathy Louvin (Ira's daughter and Charlie's niece) on *I Wish You Knew*.

Got your attention yet? How about Emmylou Harris with Rodney Crowell on *My Baby's Gone*, Merle Haggard and Jackson on *Must You Throw Dirt in My Face*, and Ronnie Dunn with the knockout pure country voice of Rebecca Lynn Howard on *If I could Only Win Your Love*. Why, Jackson even rescues the career of Glen Campbell on *When I Stop Drinking* – oops, typo – *When I Stop Dreaming*.

Not just outstanding singers, often trading harmonies to suit their vocal range, the Louvins were also fabulous songwriters. Although they penned classics like *If I Could Only Win Your Love*, *When*

I Stop Dreaming, Are You Teasing Me and *I Wish You Knew*, many of their biggest hits were written by others. Kudos to Jackson for liner notes that correct often misquoted credits. The Louvins did not write their mega-popular *You're Running Wild*, *My Baby's Gone* and *I Don't Believe You've Met My Baby*, but the material was so closely associated with them that they will also be regarded as Louvin Brothers songs. Some of their best music was not delivered in duet form. *Cash on the Barrelhead*, which they wrote, was sung by Ira alone. Here, however, in what may be the best cut of the CD, Jackson works it up as a duet Joe Nichols and Rhonda Vincent. This album is a gem. Put your cash on the barrelhead and buy it. Now.

—By Bob Remington

Mae Moore & Lester Quitzau

Oh My!
PL003

This album marks the first time the recently married couple have recorded together, done on vintage microphones in the living room of their west coast idyll. At first I was hesitant to see how Lester's edgy blues would mesh with Mae's folk-pop sound. I've never understood the force that drives musician couples to record together, as the result is usually less than excellent. However, in this case, the result is perfectly pleasant, if less groundbreaking than some of Lester's earlier solo work.

All of the songs are backed by the two on assorted guitars, with the addition of Joby Baker on bass for *Don't Miss My Misery* and *Oh My, Likewise*, all the songs were written by either or both Lester and Mae, except two interesting covers. One is Jimi Hendrix's *Little Wing*, written by, which here is given a treatment with soft vocals by Mae and jazz guitar stylings by Lester. The other is an equally good version of Tom Waits' *Hold On* that somehow manages to take all the darkness out of the original while leaving all the charm.

There are two instrumentals, *Compass* and

Charlie Picked His Apple that probably showcase the duo at their most in sync, featuring some fine guitar playing from both. Some others, such as the jazz-lite of *Tell Me* sound as if some creative tug-of-war is going on. On the whole though, the album is nice to mellow out to, if a bit repetitive (twice I thought I had the repeat button on the disc player). Once they stop trying to defer to one another's musical style and find a way to create a newer, better hybrid, I think we can expect very good things from them.

—By Shawna Biomonte

The Tannahill Weavers

Arnish Light
Green Linnet Records
GLCD1226)

Twenty-eight years after their first release Scotland's beloved Tannahill Weavers are still going strong. Fondly remembered as a wild bunch with the warpipes front and centre, time has changed. These days they are a little more sedate and the pipes have a bit more of a background role. They have stuck to traditional or tradition-based material on this their 16th album. Things kick off with a robust reading of four pipe tunes arranged as *The Arnish Light Set*. Songs such as *Cam Ye by Athol*, *The Ewie with the Crooked Horn* and *Lassie with the Linwhite Locks* are delivered with assurance. Smillie contributes a mournful air *Luskentyre Sands* and Roy Gullane sings his own romantic composition *The Rose Among the Thorn*.

What this CD lacks, however, is innovation. Perhaps this is hardly surprising given the antiquity of the band but nevertheless it still left me wanting more. The playing and singing is fine enough but the arrangements are conservative and rarely challenging. Overall this will be a welcome addition to any fan's collection but I think it unlikely to win over new converts.

—By Tim Readman

Lyle Lovett

My Baby Don't Tolerate
Lost Highway
B000116202

My Baby Don't Tolerate presents the first album of original material Lyle has put out since 1996's Grammy-winning *Road To Ensenada*. Now without the Large Band, accompaniment focuses on piano, pedal steel, and some fine mandolin playing courtesy of Sam Bush. Lyrically, Lovett's still in fine form, with thought-provoking and subtle storytelling that has made him a pariah on mainstream country radio. Never mind that though, he's found a good home on Lost Highway records, which seems to have made its mark collecting other stellar musicians from country music's fringes.

Musically, however, he seems to have lost some of the energy and wackiness that has always lent an edge to his records. Not really in a bad way though, he seems to be a more somber state. One of the best examples is *You Were Always There*, lent its atmospheric tone by the off beat, almost

jazzy rhythm. Working Too Hard is in the same vein, but pretty rather than spooky, with some lovely steel playing threaded throughout. Other great tracks include the toe-tapping redux of San Antonio Girl, the highway country of Nothing But A Good Ride, and Election Day, the only non-original. *My Baby Don't Tolerate* is capped off with two rousing gospel tracks, backed by full choirs.

Some have accused him of recycling material for this album. Well, *Road To Ensenada* was a hard record to top, but personally I don't miss the horns. It's a recording made by an artist still in his prime after all these years, and absolutely essential for any Lyle Lovett fan.

—By Shawna Biomonte

Joel Kroeker

Melodrama
True North Records

The title of Joel Kroeker's new CD, *Melodrama*, bears an inner meaning for the songwriter. "The intense daily drama of life is only survivable when I allow melody to seep through the cracks and save me."

The twelve original songs on the album cover a variety of life's typical heartbreaks, as well as Kroeker's more meditative ruminations about the futility of looking for paradise, or words for someone on the brink of suicide.

A touch of worldweariness has entered Joel's voice since his debut *Naive Bohemian*, but his songs seem to relish beauty and loss simultaneously. Solid musicianship is provided by Kevin Breit on guitar and George Koller on bass, with dreamy back-ups by Kathryn Rose and Susie Vinnick. Kroeker's relationship with the True North record label has resulted in Danny Greenspoon (Great Big Sea/Spirit of the West) taking on production duties, and *Melodrama* has an even, professional depth to it. We're in good hands here, as Joel takes us into his bittersweet, keenly observed pain.

Kroeker has spent the last few years accumulating awards — Alberta's CBC Performance 2000 and an ARIA award for Best New Recording Artist. With this new disc, Joel Kroeker consolidates the skills he's been honing, and gives us his unique perspective on life.

—By Lark Clark

Various Artists

Cold Mountain Soundtrack
Various artists
Columbia/Sony 86843

Bit, bitch, bitch. In case you haven't heard, the bluegrass world is some cheesed off about Jack White of the garage-rock band White Stripes getting all the work on *Cold Mountain*. The traditionalists thought they had the inside track to do the work on the Civil War love story. But, man, do they have a bone to pick with producer T-Bone



Mae Moore & Lester Quitzau



Te Vaka

Burnett. I mean, Jack White? Who the hell is he to be playing this type of music, anyway? And how about Sting and Elvis Costello writing some of the material? Whasup wit dat?

Give it up, people. White may not have the pedigree of any one of dozens of artists knocking their brains out playing traditional American Appalachian music for peanuts, but the fact of the matter is that he does a credible job on *Wayfaring Stranger*. I don't care for White Stripes, either. But you don't have to be Bob Dylan to sing *Blowin' In the Wind*. Geez, bluegrass music wasn't even invented back in the Civil War, and how is a po' Confederate deserter to know what traditional 'old time' Appalachian mountain music sounded like in the days before radio? (White plays the role of Georgia, a mandolin-picking hillbilly who wins the heart of Renée Zellweger character, Ruby.)

That said, the soundtrack is disappointing. Burnett had a chance to better his work on *O Brother, Where Art Thou*, which sold more than six million copies and opened up a new generation of ears to the gospel, blues and mountain music of the 1930s that coalesced into country and bluegrass. But with *Cold Mountain*, the movie's lush orchestral background music is included with the old-time fiddle and banjo of artists like Dirk Powell. It just doesn't work. *O Brother* kept a consistency of styles; *Cold Mountain* is all over the map.

— By Bob Remington

The Hottentots

Graceful
Independent
HPCD03

The Hottentots are Carl Cleves, who sings and plays guitar, and Parissa Bouas, who also sings and beats on various percussion instruments. They come from Australia and can only be described as 'not my cup of tea'. There's a hotch potch of influences and instruments from round the world at

work here but it all amounts to a bit of a sickly concoction. The lyrics are a bit banal and sometimes downright dumb. 'Stretch your wings learn to fly, there's a rainbow in the sky' — you know, that kind of thing. There's an unappealing earnestness to the themes and a distinct lack of understanding of how to write poetically. Too often you can hear the dull thud of the pedantic pen hitting the page. I'm sure their hearts are in the right place. It is just that often the words are not. It sounds like they are trying too hard to be political, meaningful spiritual and joyful.

OK that's enough. You get the message and I've got to get this thing off my hi fi. Ouch!

— By Tim Readman

Rob Currie

This Gentlest Country
Independent

Rob Currie is from Miramichi, New Brunswick. He is probably best known as the leader of The Comerboys, a stalwart band of the Maritime folk music scene. This is his first solo CD and is a collection of eleven original songs, one traditional and a David Stone composition. This is a melodic and tuneful collection which will especially appeal to natives of Rob's home region. Instrumentation is comprised of guitar, banjo, whistles, fiddle, bouzouki, tin whistle, bass, bodhran and pipes. Guest musicians include fiddler Richard Wood, Dave MacIsaac, Tom Roach and the members of The Comerboys. Rob's singing style is warm and personal and is well suited to the material presented here.

The overall sound draws heavily on traditional Irish and Scottish music and the sounds of the Atlantic Canada. Perhaps his greatest strength is his ability to write in a traditional style. His songs tell stories that evoke vivid images of the people and places that inspired them.

The Rape of Grand Pré conveys the tale of the ethnic cleansing that occurred when the Acadians were deported from their communities. *Island with a Broken Heart* is a moving tribute to the late John

Morris Rankin and refers to a grieving Cape Breton Islander. *Miramichi Men* is a tribute to the lumberjacks who worked the banks of the Miramichi River. *Shores of Canada (The Ballad of Andrew Currie)* recounts the imaginary tale of Rob's first Canadian ancestor as he made his way to Miramichi from Annan in Scotland.

A very promising debut from a writer who has captured the essence of the traditional folk songs of his heritage with this collection whilst stamping them firmly with his own identity.

— By Tim Readman

Te Vaka

Nukukehe
Warm Earth Records
WMCD1003

Te Vaka is a group of eleven musicians and dancers from Tokelau, Tuvalu, Samoa, Cook Islands, and New Zealand brought together under the leadership of Opetia Foa'i, a New Zealand songwriter. Their name, Te Vaka, translates as "the canoe" in the language of Tokelau.

Nukukehe (Different land) is their third album and is a celebration of Polynesian culture. With guitars, keyboards, flutes, body percussion, traditional Maori, Samoan and Tokelauan sounds and chants, Te Vaka fuses socially aware lyrics, modern instrumentation into gorgeous arrangements. There's no English here, the songs penned by Opetia Foa'i are all sung in Tokelauan. Te Vaka's music is traditionally influenced embracing its indigenous Oceanic roots yet contemporary in its earthy, tribal, warm, and atmospheric sound.

A couple of the great songs here are *Alamagota* a joyous, timbale-led hymn to the Pacific Ocean and *Sei ma le Losa*, a tribute to the late Greenpeace founder David McTaggart.

This CD is wonderful. It's rhythms infectious and it makes me smile. It also makes me want to rush out and see them live.

— By les siemieniuk

Chris Warren

Beautiful Ruins
Urban Myth Recordings
UM - 108-2

The best adjective to describe Toronto singer/songwriter Chris Warren might just be "idiosyncratic." He has an original and oft off-beat worldview and sound, and that makes *Beautiful Ruins* a refreshing listen. It is just his second full-length album, and it surfaces seven years after his debut, *Crazy Wisdom*, a record that drew praise from peers like Ron Sexsmith and Mary Margaret O'Hara. Warren has played his share of local folk clubs, but the musical and lyrical sophistication on display here can't be easily contained within the folk label. Instruments as varied as accordion, bassoon and flugelhorn are used to add subtle colourings on the songs, and such accomplished players as Maury Lafoy (Starling), Tom Bona (Sue Foley) and Sarah McElcheran are featured effectively.

Warren is a published poet, and his strengths as a

lyricist are considerable. One sample: 'Intolerable pain cracks your face like lightning over a clear night sky' (*Memory Is Water*). Topics here range from his aging cat (*Yaffa's In Her Twilight Years*) to the death of a junkie indie rocker of his acquaintance (*Dubious Elegy*). The album is dedicated 'to our siblings, the great apes, now standing on the brink of extinction,' and man's abuse of the planet and other species is explored in *All Of You Hairless Apes* and *Thanks...And Sorry*. The evocative title song has something of an Al Stewart feel (I took up arms against my homeland...I joined up with the partisans), and is an album highlight. Beautiful Ruins is one strong piece of work. Let's hope its creator doesn't take so long on his next one.

— By Kerry Doole

Intakto

Intakto
Justin Time
JTR8497-2

This Quebec tango outfit is a bit too heavy on the melodrama for my taste. Specifically, Chilean Alejandro Venegas lays it on thick with his vocals. They drip with passion but not enough sincerity. Thankfully, his guitar strumming is fine enough and partner Simon Claude's violin is often exquisite. When they play instrumentally, the duo turns out cheerful, high-stepping tangos every bit as accomplished as their label-mates, Quartango. But then comes that voice again. Maybe women find it attractive or romantic or something, but Venegas' singing seems just a touch over the top and with a bit of a warble at that.

Still, there is much to like here. *Tango Nihon* is moody, sultry and atmospheric: all sighing guitar and weeping violin. And *Preparense* features the kind of strong pulse and assertive strings that makes tango so sensual. All *Intakto* needs to do now is can the vocals and let the instruments do the singing.

— By Charles Mandel

Jerry Garcia & David Grisman

Been All Around This World
Acoustic Disc
ACD-57

Grisman and Garcia, two hippy soul mates who shared a love of old-time, jazz, country, blues and pop, recorded too little of the music that inspired their later musical wanderings into Dawg and Dead (Dead Dawg?). On these 12 tracks from recordings squirreled away by Grisman in God (Gawd?) knows what cookie jar for all these years, the grizzled duo dabble in everything from Dylan to James Brown, visiting George Jones, Merle Travis and Jimmie Rodgers along the way. Playing acoustic instruments, their rendition of James Browns' *I'll Go Crazy* is bizarre (some stuff works in acoustic mode, other stuff is better left untampered), while other material, like *Nine Pound Hammer* and *I'm Troubled*, work wonderfully.

— By Bob Remington



Jerry Garcia, Artie Rose & David Grisman

John Henry

Charmin' Billy
Independent
RDR 003

Country folk rock greatness I've never seen these boys live (seeing as they "blew off the gig in Halifax"—the bastards), but if their live show matches up to this record, they can play at both my wedding and the divorce party. When does anything country-esque have lyrics that are interesting, touching, bawdy, and intelligent? John Gorham's songs range from the hilariously ridiculous *Personal* (a meditation on the brutal truth of personal ad dates) and *I Like...* to tender and heartfelt emotional articulations in *Orphan Lake*, *First Light* and a really sweet rendition of Joanne Myrol and Fred Eaglesmith's *Mascara Dawn*. The band—Chris Smith on guitar and pedal steel, Cam Neufeld on fiddle, Thom Golub on bass and Dwayne Hrynkiw on drums—fill this record with solidly skilled playful energy, showing off in two pleasantly diverse instrumental numbers and flipping easily between the honky-tonk, the boom-chick-chick, and the waltzy ballad. Notable guests include the ever-brilliant Maria Dunn with her squeezebox and Mike McDonald on the harmonica, as well as a chorus line of harmony singers. John Gorham is the Gram Parsons of Canadian country, creating intricate new music from the roots of the past.

— By Annie Clifford

Jim Byrnes

Fresh Horses
Black Hen Music
BHCD15752

From the opening track of *Fresh Horses* it's clear that Vancouver blues legend Jim Byrnes is not only back in the saddle, but riding high and proud. *B's Blues* starts with a chuckle as the St Louis-born guitarist launches into a warm and laid-back blues that highlights his remarkably relaxed singing. The self-confidence in Byrnes' gruff voice is well-founded: with the support of Steve Dawson on guitars, Jesse Zubot on fiddle, Chris Gestrin on

Hammond organ, Elliot Polsky on drums, and Andrew Downing on stand-up bass, he's produced a superb album of acoustic music. It simultaneously takes him back to his roots and influences and nudges them in some innovative directions.

There's no padding of any kind on the album's twelve tracks as Byrnes covers an impressive variety of music and moods. Muddy Waters' classic *I Can't Be Satisfied* bubbles with good humourous covers an impressive variety of music and moods, whereas The Mississippi Sheiks' *I've Got Blood In My Eyes For You* feels as menacing as its title suggests. There's a lyrical and meditative interpretation of Dylan's *Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues*, and a stark version of the traditional folk song *East Virginia*, with Byrnes playing banjo and Zubot contributing touches of eerie industrial-sounding fiddle. And a handful of compositions are from the blues veteran's own pen: the poignant soul ballad *Just A Pilgrim*, the darkly introspective *12 Questions*, and the humorous *Postcard from Mexico* (complete with trumpet fanfare).

With *Fresh Horses* Byrnes has found a team of thoroughbreds to rejuvenate the music he so clearly loves.

— By Tony Montague

Bratsch

Nomades En Vol
Network
25.193

Bratsch, based in the greater Paris area, are a band that successfully combines Jazz, Klezmer, South-east European and Roma music. They are: Dan Gharibian: bouzouki, guitar, vocals — Bruno Girard: Violin, vocals — François Castiello: accordion, vocals — Nano Peytel: Clarinet, vocals — Pierre Jacquet: double bass. This lush and richly-nuanced package is a two-disc, 25th anniversary retrospective collection, taken from their 12 self-produced recordings. Compiled by Christos Scholzakis and Jean Trouillet, who both write essays for the included colour booklet, translated into French, German, and English, it's a landmark compilation. Disc One covers 1988 — 1994, while Disc Two spans 1995 — 2003. There are both live and studio recordings. Transported is the key word with this band. You're transported to other times and to a blur of locations — France, Greece, Israel, Russia, Macedonia, Armenia, and Romania. You're also transported from the delicious depths of sadness, on the slow numbers, to the flashing heights of ecstasy on the dance tunes. When they're cooking, everything exhorts you to move, from the strong and passionate vocals, through the 'Ho! Ho! Ho!' background cries, to the lightning fast riffs. For all their variety, Bratsch blends the threads together into a seamless musical fabric. Yet, there's the odd colorful applique, such as the striking vocal of Mónika "Mitosu" Juhász Miczura, singing in Romanes, on track 6, disc 2.

51

PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Recordings



You couldn't do better as an introduction to the group and their music. Their playing can be passionate and wild, verging on discordant, one moment and sophisticated, technically sublime, and hitting virtuoso levels the next. A great family portrait of these talented musical vagabonds.

—By Barry Hammond

The Demon Barbers

Uncut
DJC Records
DJC019

Uncut opens with a blast of trad-rockery unlike anything you're likely to have heard in quite some time. Sublimely infectious accordion and fiddle lines snake atop a bass and drum bedrock, putting a quintessentially English spin on Jack Hardy's *Willie Goggin*. And while the rest of the disc is at points a hair short of this same high standard, it's still head and shoulders above much of the folk-rock pack. Led by Damien Barber (nicknamed 'Demon Barber' by Peter Bellamy, hence the band name), the Barbers are a brilliant blend of modern and traditional elements. Many groups who take this road end up sounding a mess, missing the point entirely. The Demon Barbers, on the other hand, strike a perfect balance, in large part because they avoid the (hard-)rock mannerisms that sink so many of their peers. Barber sings in a resolutely traditional fashion (in the manner of his home county of Norfolk), the fiddle, melodeon and concertina are mixed up front, and the emphasis is firmly on the songs and tunes. But the modern still sneaks in, most obviously in the music's intensity and arrangements. *Way down town* is revelatory, with its dub bass line and plucked strings, and Barber's finger style guitar on the tune *The Drunken Sailor* is jaw-dropping. Pete Morton's

Better than Sex is another highlight, and *Companion of a Mile*, an original tune married with the words of poet Alfred Noyes, feels short despite clocking in at 7:39. As a live band they must be awesome: Bryony Griffith (fiddle & vocals), Will Hampson (melodeon), Lee Sykes (bass), Rich Ashby (drums), and Barber (vocals, guitar, concertina). Daring, refreshing, and eminently listenable, the Demon Barbers demand your attention.

—By Richard Thornley

Kevin Cook

Western Union
Flap-jack
CM-88

This is Edmonton singer songwriter Kevin Cook's third recording. He is joined by local harmonica ace Rusty Reed and Cam Neufeld on mandolin, who are the primary backing band along with Kory Burns on bass and Dee Dee Black on backing vocals.

The result is a simple, well-arranged bluesy collection of eleven original tunes.

The playing is solid and dependable. The sparseness of the arrangements was an excellent direction to follow given the roots flavoured material.

The songs are well delivered in Kevin's soft country blues voice. The best song on the album is *Lemon Grove* a lovely little ragtime influenced number. *Western Union* is a pleasant and charming record.

—By les siemieniuk

Riders in the Sky

Silver Jubilee
Acoustic Disc
ACD-55

Break out the beans 'n' biscuits, pull on the sheepskin chaps and settle in for a double-CD dose of Riders in the Sky as the cowpoke crooners celebrate 25 years of corncob hokum, testosterone-defying yodeling and some of the smoothest harmonies this side of Dodge City. Yes, sir, buckaroos and buckereettes, it's your favourite cowboy quartet marking a quarter century out on the old musical trail. There ain't a cactus these boys haven't met, travelling the world putting the western back into country and western music. Sure, some of it's corny but, dang nab it anyway, I like these hombres — especially since Ranger Doug, Too Slim and Woody Paul added accordion player Joey the Cowpolka King. (Just what are their real names, anyway?).

Keeping alive the Old West tradition of Gene Autry and Sons of the Pioneers, Riders in the Sky are entertainers in the purest sense of the word. The group is best seen live, but this double CD captures the playfulness of the group on disc. (One segment was recorded live in Dixon, Tennessee.) When they first came on the scene, I thought it was clever novelty act that wouldn't last. While comedy is a big part of their schtick, these are fine players and truly great harmony singers. Most of the

material will be familiar to fans. If you don't have any other Riders CD, this may be the one to get.

—By Bob Remington

Das Macht Show

Four Legs Good
Independent

What the heck was that? A feisty potpourri of sounds that slams country, swing, klezmer, bluegrass and jazz against a wall to see what sticks results in a uniquely distinctive effort in which everything sticks. *Gone Gone Gone* suggests a wry Dan Hicks that features the powerful presence of Murray Evans' vocals whereas *Mariachi Song* visits a smoother, more worldly Joe Ely with a side of Doug Sahm. This is kooky yet professionally produced material that is loaded with heart and personality. Take *Four Legs Good* with its gypsy groove and *Last Train To Clarksville* imprint, amidst sheep bleats and hints of Celtic accord. I want some of whatever these guys are on. Take Karla Ferguson's turn on lead vocals with *Don't Be A Man* — bent lyrics set against the backdrop of a heartfelt ballad (featuring a quick stab of slashing guitar by guest Murray Pulver). But whatever you do, take heed. This twisted, irreverent quintet's take on originality might intimidate at first but the disc's pure musical approach will quickly hit its mark.

—By Eric Thom

Davie Robertson

Star o' the Bar
Greenrux Recordings
CD Trax 254

Davie Robertson comes from the Edinburgh and East Lothian folk scene and has a reputation as an entertaining live performer at clubs and sessions. He sings in a strong Scots dialect and accompanies himself mainly on piano accordion. The title track of this CD is one of Scotland's most-sung folk-club anthems.

The 15 original compositions presented here cover the whole range of topics associated with the Scottish traditional song. There's humorous songs such as *The Hanky* a nine-verse ode to the multifarious and frequently disgusting uses of the handkerchief and *Strict Hygiene* which underlines the importance of wearing clean undies. On the serious side there's the rueful *Cold Comfort* about the unwelcome homecoming of an exile and *Cruel Hungry Sea* about the hardships facing North Sea fishermen. There are odes to Scotland's natural beauty like *Quiet October Hills* and *Anthem for Scotland* as well as a political material such as the *Chimp* and the *Poodle* a satire on the Iraq war.

Overall it is a noble effort but lacks the punch that his live performances are reputed to have. A bit more variety in arrangement and instrumentation would have helped lift the material out of the ordinary and into the hearts of the listener

—By Tim Readman.

Ken Hamm

Fingerlicks: An Instrumental Collection
North Track Records
NTCD0301

This is one of the hands-down best acoustic guitar recordings I have heard in a long, long time. Weighing in at just under 50 minutes, Hamm has compiled 16 songs—13 of them new ones, and takes the listener on a delightful journey that encompasses almost every emotion imaginable through his expert playing. He's billed as an 'acoustic country blues' player but his repertoire crosses over into folk and bluegrass and beyond, aided by the added instrumentation of banjo, mandolin, bass, hand drums and harmonica. The large trio format provides a fully animated sound across such classics as John Fahey's *Last Steam Engine Train* and Leo Kottke's *Fisherman*. These fit seamlessly with Hamm's originals like the jubilant *Burns Lake Dance/Swap The Vest* or *Redhaired Shake* or his take on the traditional, Cooderesque *Shenandoah*, which positively soars in his capable hands. Fingerlickin' good would be an understatement.

—By Eric Thom

Natalie MacMaster

Blueprint
BMG Music

Natalie MacMaster has recorded her newest release in Nashville, and includes some excellent tunes, and solos on a few songs. There are great guests here, like Bela Fleck, Jerry Douglas, Alison Brown, but generously allowing them all solo time does take us off into other textures that don't always reflect the Cape Breton tradition. Thank heaven for the piano playing of Tracey Dares, who keeps the whole thing rooted despite the competition.

As for the track selection, *The Jig Party* has classic MacMaster energy, *The Devil and the Dirk* showcases full flow fiddling, *Minnie and Alex's Reel* features some melodic invention, and on *Josefin's Waltz* Natalie is given some musical room to breathe and sighs out a beautiful tune. There's a big country loping bass through many of the other tracks, with strong solos from the numerous session players. If you fancy some countrified Cape Breton, then this release is an interesting showcase for one of Canada's top talents.

—By David Ingram

Mighty Popo

Ngagara
Global Village
TRCD 3005

Born in '67, emigrated here in 87. Ottawa resident Popo Murigande spent the first twenty years of his life in Burundi, a central African nation whose social fabric has been shredded by decades of murderous violence, poverty stricken lives and broken hearts. No wonder his songs rue the situation back home, and call for understanding and

forward thinking.

If Popo sings the language of his original home, he's also fluent in many styles, and delivers his entrancing bluesy Afro-Caribbean music with an earthy sincerity. Tight swaying rhythms and strong musical values are all well arranged and powerfully delivered. There's excellent energy streaming from his core band and their many guests, and if the lyrics are in another dialect, a few notes in the sleeve cover elucidate his intent in each of the 11 songs.

This third release from the artist is a good listen, and the right preparation for one of his dynamite live shows.

—By David Ingram

Ted 'Dr. J' Jablonski

It Really Don't Change Much
Independent
PGM 003

Some songs are written just for the writer. Others mean a lot to a close circle of friends and family. Others yet have what it really takes to reach a wider audience. The availability of digital recording and the ever diminishing costs of manufacturing CD's has made it possible to make the quantum leap from bedroom musician into recording artist in no time at all. What blooms beautifully in the hothouse like warm glow of family and friends appreciation dies very quickly under the frosty glare of the long-toothed reviewer.

This is a worthy enough effort but why damn it with faint praise. It's better to just say 'for friends and family only'.

—By Tim Readman

Various Artists

Bravo! Chill Brazil
WEA TVTD
47019

Blame it on the bossa nova. The subtle and melodic charms of Brazilian music are seducing a fast-growing number of music lovers internationally. This double CD collection is definitely in part about marketing (heavy promotion on arts channel Bravo!), but it functions nicely as an introduction to more contemporary takes on bossa nova. The vaults of Warner Brazil were raided, and tracks here span from 1977 to 2001. Genre greats like Gilberto Gil, Tom Jobim, Joao Gilberto and current star Bebel Gilberto are all well-represented, while the quality of material from lesser known names remains high. Perfect for your next dinner party, or for patio listening come summer.

—By Kerry Doole

Misia

Canto
2564-608505

Canto is the new tribute to Portuguese composer Carlos Paredes put out by the reigning queen of fado, Misia. She has sought to push the boundaries of the 150 year old art form her entire career, and

now has brought it home through the compositions of the respected Paredes, and the poetry of fellow countrymen Vasco Graca Moura and Sergio Godinho, who provide the lyrics to these beautiful songs.

For her last album, *Ritual*, Misia returned to the stripped down roots of fado, only having a Portuguese guitar, a Bass guitar, a viola and an accordion as accompaniments. On this album, perhaps as a nod to the composer, the aforementioned instruments are joined by a string quartet. For those that prefer their fado a little less adulterated, it might take some getting used to. But the timeless and trend less heart of the music still shines through, elevated by Misia's incomparably beautiful voice. In some cases, like in *Sem Saber*, which is opened by the lone, mournful voice of the cello, the additions perfectly accentuate the longing and emotion that is indicative of the song form. On others, the traditional and classical sounds mesh so that you can't tell where one ends and the other begins. Well done from top to bottom.

—By Shawna Biomonte

Dr. Faustus

The First Cut
Fellside Recordings
FECD177

Dr. Faustus are Tim Van Eyken, Benji Kirkpatrick, Robert Harbron and Paul Sartin and between them they play melodeon, guitar, concertina, bassoon, bouzouki, harmonica fiddle and oboe. And very well they play too. Their arrangements are imaginative and include subtle vocal harmony and interplay. The material here is almost all traditional and is mostly English.



53

PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Recordings

Stand out tracks are *Thresherman* with its highly original vocal arrangement, a fresh new reading of *The Lincolnshire Poacher* and the beautifully orchestrated and noble love-riddle song *The Cambric Shirt*.

The whole CD is melodic and pleasant and features some genuinely lovely instrumental playing. There is a stately, almost classical feel to much of this recording. The singing is very smooth but if I am honest it's all a wee bit polite and restrained for my taste. There's obviously plenty of love gone into this recording but I could have used a bit more lust. It made me yearn for something with a bit more earthiness and passion. I'd recommend a night out in the East End of Vancouver with me and my mates before the next recording just to roughen things up a bit...over to you lads.

— By Tim Readman

Ewan MacColl

The Definitive Collection
Highpoint Recordings
HPO6006

Topic records have launched a new cut-price label. This compilation of songs by one of the leading lights of the British Folk Revival is one of its first releases. It is a wide-ranging anthology of traditional ballads and MacColl originals some of which are appearing on CD for the first time. Much has been written about MacColl's contribution to folk music and many artists have plundered his repertoire for material. This CD should help his music reach the ears of the uninitiated. Overall the sound is quite primitive with most of the accompaniment being provided by Peggy Seeger on guitar and banjo. His vocal vibrato and the adoption of various regional accents appropriate to the sources of the songs lend a quaintness to the performances that modern audiences might find a little too close to the dated 'finger in the ear' approach to folk singing. Once you get past that there is a treasure trove of great songs here. Fine traditionalists like *To the Beggin' I will go*, *The Sheepstealer* and *The Press Gang* make up the bulk of the recording and are well supported by originals such as *The Manchester Angel* and *Fourpence a Day*. This is the sound of a master at work.

— By Tim Readman

Jevan Cole and Jan Van Dijk

Tunes Of Curly Nature
Treeskin Music
TSK91103

If their nature is curly, these Brisbane lads are all so well around the curve, and can sail their way through inspired treatments of a wave of well worked tunes. This release is a solid listen from the two very creative antipodeans. Jevan Cole and Jan Van Dijk play guitar and fiddle in a succession of sparkling duets, sometimes almost Breton, some-

times almost English Folk, with a host of other textures to boot. They also compose, and have written, with dextrous hands and clear spirited inspiration, most of this album themselves. The lads play an intricate, individual style, full of earthy feel and a fecund flow of ideas. Jevan is fabulous on the guitar, fluid and quietly brilliant, while Jan's fiddle swoops and soars with grit and wit. Their sound is traditional, but they have their own musical identity. There's lots to savour on this album, hopefully not the last from a livewire duo.

— By David Ingram

Old Crow Medicine Show

O.C.M.S.
Network
0 6700 30349 2 0

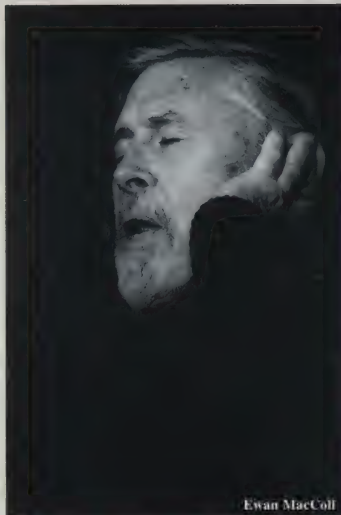
It's hard to tell exactly where and when punk mixed with country and old-timey music. Maybe it was Rank & File, or when The Violent Femmes played *Country Death Song*. Or maybe it goes all the way back to Bob Dylan, or before that to Sun Records. Whatever, the mix is obviously here to stay. Old Crow Medicine Show is another star in the distinguished galaxy of bands that fuse punk energy with pre-war blues, bluegrass fiddle and banjo music, keeping traditional numbers going, while penning some pretty impressive originals of their own. The key to O.C.M.S. is the authentic, rough-hewn vocal harmonies by band members Ketch Secor, Critter Fuqua, and Willie Watson. Watson, in particular, is outstanding on such originals as *Poor Man*, *Trials & Troubles*, and *We're All In This Together*. O.C.M.S. is what happens when young, good-looking American boys, who can really play their acoustic instruments with driving energy, forge a tight, old-time band sound. David Rawlings (Gillian Welch's guitar-wielding partner) produces and takes the unadorned, barebones approach that T-Bone Burnett applied so successfully to Welch's projects, letting the instruments and the songs speak for themselves. Welch, herself, adds spare drums played with brushes (solving the mystery of who played drums on her last album), so they're nearly indistinguishable from the rhythm of the banjos and bass. Secor is even daring enough to add extra lyrics to Dylan's *Wagon Wheel* Fine stuff.

— By Barry Hammond

Leahy

In All Things
Virgin Canada
16 120203

Leahy, for all their talent, exuberance, and showmanship are essentially a balancing act. They have to walk a tightrope where all eight siblings in the Lakefield, Ontario group can show off their various qualities equally. On stage, the instrument switching, the physical charms of each member and sheer amount of musical ability they possess overwhelms the audience and bludgeons them into submissive worship. On disc, it's a bit trickier. Their debut was strictly instrumental, but their last,



Ewan MacColl

Lakefield, had them incorporating the sister's pop vocals into their traditional Celtic, folk, rock, pop amalgam. This new disc takes the mix even further. Donnal Leahy's violin pyrotechnics have to share the stage with brother Frank's snappy rock drumming, the clog rhythms of the dancers, and sister Siobheann, Denise, Maria, Agnes and Erin's vocals, which range from the breathy mysticism of *High Places*, to the pop stylings of *Coyote Way* and *Runaway* to the wrenching sentimentality of *I Want You To Know*. Then there's the pianos and keyboards, which range from full overblown, bal-lad pseudo-classical to barroom boogie. It's a strange mix and in less talented hands it wouldn't work at all. That Leahy manage to keep all the balls in the air without the whole thing collapsing is what makes them interesting. If you like chain-saw juggling, you'll like Leahy's latest.

— By Barry Hammond

Back Porch Swing

Back Porch Swing
JPM Records
JPM 1

Like the title implies, *Back Porch Swing* sounds like a group of musicians sitting around informally, pickin', singin', and havin' a good time. The group is Penny Malmberg on vocals and guitar and Jim Malmberg on vocals, mandolin, mandola, and guitar. They're backed on this disc by Cam Neufeld playing some pretty zippy violin and Kevin Jacobson on bass. They go through covers of Johnny Mercer's *I'm An Old Cowhand*, Jesse Fuller's *San Francisco Bay Blues*, *Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens* (made famous by Louis Jordan) and some Dan Hicks. The Dan Hicks comparison is a good one because, in their originals, like *I Kin Make You Feel Like Butter*, *My Not So Fred Astaire*, *Then I Turned Green*, and *Ain't No Fat In Heaven* the Malmbergs display that

same talent for writing witty, humorously charming lyrics mixed with funky jazz/blues/country that Hicks was known for. It's a nice debut, relaxed, loose, but with some tasty playing that should win them some well-deserved fans. A pretty good album to kick back and relax with. We look forward to hearing more.

— By Barry Hammond

Jim Bryson

The North Side Benches
Orange Record Label
7697422522

Jim Bryson is a singer-songwriter influenced by Buffalo Tom, Wilco, Palace, Billy Bragg and Paul Westerberg. He is a native of the nation's capital, home of Alannis Morrisette, his friend Kathleen Edwards and the Senators and is a former member of Punchbuggy. On this CD he explores the territory between contemporary acoustic rock and alt-country. Instrumentation is what you'd expect — electric and acoustic guitar, steel guitar, bass guitar, harmonica, drums and various keyboards with Jim playing a lot of them himself. There's a few unexpected bits like the glockenspiel on *At Least for Now* and the background radio sounds on *Broken Fingers*. His vocals are relaxed and easy going and have a pleasing burr to them. After one listen I was thinking that there's nothing special here but subsequent plays got me a bit more interested. I still can't decide whether this CD is a masterpiece of understatement or whether it just lacks clout. I'm planning to give it a few more listens to see whether it is a hidden grower. I suggest you do the same.

— By Tim Readman

The Watsonsons

The Definitive Collection
Highpoint Recordings
HPO6004

This is a fine introduction to the large volume of material from the act who hit the UK folk scene in the mid 60's with four part vocal sound that garnered rave reviews and attracted attention from outside the folk world including the trendy English 60's pop scene. Yes, even the Stones dug The Watsonsons. It includes tracks as a group, as soloists and in collaboration with others such as Coope, Boyes and Simpson.

Originally they were composed of two sisters, Norma and Lal, their brother Mike and cousin John Harrison all from Hull in North Yorkshire, England. Sadly Lal is dead now and Mike has all but retired. Worthy replacements like Jill Pidd and Martin Carthy were drafted in until the act eventually mutated into Watsonson-Carthy with Eliza and Martin Carthy, Norma and Tim van Eyken. This CD has songs from every era of the group's history. Their sound still has a freshness and excitement to it even after all these years. There are hunting songs, hymns, ballads, story songs, wassail songs and songs of the sea in abundance here. This will be a welcome addition to any folk fans collection.

Warning — no artificial sweeteners or preservatives. 100 percent organic.

— By Tim Readman

Gerry Barnum

Harmony
Mr. Cheez & Big Pad Production
CD02

Onomatopoeia: imitative harmony. After two cuts on Gerry Barnum's *Harmony*, you may hear only the imitation. *Gotta Get Somewhere* is East Indian blues. The lapslide sound, the vocals, and rhythms are Harry Manx. It was bound to happen. There should be a law against that many talented folks living sinfully close on the B. C. Ozark islands.

Gerry is a corner. He has the music. Although he has backed Taj Mahal, Ry Cooder and other notables, the solo deficiencies are lyrics and mood. In *Freetime* his guitar and harmonica are far too happy for blues. And the lyrics? *Easy Now* has the good blues sound. But the lyrics are preachy and platitudinous. Then there is *Joyride*. On a bus? This is a great driving music. Good sounds, but keep your thoughts on the road.

— By Les Pearson

Nonie Crete

Girl in a Crazy World
Paul Mills & Rea Studios
nc004

Some CDs are meant to drive you mad. Nonie Crete's latest, *Girl in a Crazy World*, may force you to the brink. Maybe it's the insane mix of subjects and themes or maybe even the uneven quality. Sing those gritty blues, you funky white girl! But stay away from rural Alberta's *Turkey Dinner Suppers* and *Wannabe Cowboys*. Nonie is coherent on home Ontario turf.

There are exquisite moments mixed in this madness. *Let It Rain* made Enya's mom cry, but Nonie's pretentious phraseology may make you weep. Listen to the jarring noise in this line: "I have loved, I have lost, I have paid high the cost."

The final cut features Nonie and her daughter, Kathleen, as solo artists and duet chorus. *Mother Bird* is simply poignant. Trust children to bring sanity to a crazy world! Children and Nonie's great harmonica.

— By Les Pearson

Kat Goldman

The Great Disappearing Act
Independent
2001

The folk-pop sensation of the century, this has pretty much everything a great record needs: ridiculous humour, original poetry, great variety, and blatant yet coy use of that finest of instruments: the drum machine. Kat's sweet singing is straight from the heart: her voice, like her lyrics, is a refreshing change from the Harmer, DiFranco, and "Irish" takeoffs floating around these days.

Songs range from the brilliant pop-mock title track and the Casio PT-1 rocker *Everyone's Getting Married* to the simple, touching acoustic *Balloon* and the folksy memoir *Annabel* (which metamorphosized nicely onto the Celtic rigmarole of the Duhk's repertoire). Her band is tight and dexterous, following her musical acrobatics like a loyal band of high-seas pirates. Especially lovely is Richard Bell's keys and Elliott Sairan's dobro, especially wonderful is Robbie Roth's kazoo solo. But what really kills me is that when Kat wants to talk about love, she's as far from cliché as Moscow is from L.A.: words of devotion include "I have never met a creature from your planet," and "I went whoosh." In short: hilarious genius from a lady who knows what music's all about.

— By Annie Clifford

Various Artists

Arabia: Arabesque to Oud:
Contemporary Arabian Sounds
World Music Network
RGNET 1121 CD

C'mon everyone, it's time to sheikh your booty to that funky Arabic sound. Arabia is your typical compilation mix of contemporary and traditional sounds, but with a difference: the warbly singing, see-sawing strings and hip-hop beats benefit Oxfam's work in Iraq and Yemen in this instance. That definitely gives this release a bit of extra bling-bling.

— By Charles Mandel

Peru Negro

Jolgorio
Times Square Records
TSQ-CD-9035

We're all familiar with Afro-Cuban music, but



Jim Bryson

55
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Recordings

how about Afro-Peruvian? Apparently, such as genre exists and purportedly Peru Negro is its leading exponent. For over 30 years, the group has provided its unique brand of percussion-slapping, up-tempo Latin music. It just goes to show you what we've been missing.

Monica Duenas has a marvellous, expressive voice, Felipe Pumarada's guitar strumming fills in the blanks neatly and the assorted percussionists make sure everything's hopping. In fact, on *Taita Guranguito*, the bongo and bell players work themselves into a veritable frenzy.

Certainly, with the familiar ascending Latin rhythms, it's easy to hear the connection to other Cuban jazz forms. What's not clear is the Peruvian connection, the origin of the music excepted. That's a small quibble, though. A few horns and this group could rival Cubanismo. As it stands, they've got plenty of spirit and puck and are certainly enjoyable enough.

— By Charles Mandel

Vasen Trio

Vasen Trio

NorthSide
NSD6077

How about this: moody Celtic music from a cold, dark Northern country. Surprise. It's Sweden, not Canada. This string trio plays catchy, foot-tapping music that twists, turns and winds back on itself. Certainly, though, the Vasen Trio's forceful songs carry a brooding edge to them that speaks of long cold winters.

Using a mix of harp, viola and violin and guitar, Olov Johansson, Mikael Marin and Roger Tallroth reel off polkas, waltzes and marches with a fair bit of attitude and style. A leading folk band in their home country, this is the group's fifth recording.

While their choice of instrumentation gives them a woody sound, they are not without a sense of humour. *Dr. Oldgren* is described as "Dr. Jonas Oldren's cardiologist polka with an extra beat," and *In the Middle of Life* comes with the comment: "When you turn 40 you might need a waltz." Indeed. The sentiment is appreciated. Vasen Trio's lovely, strong music is a likely candidate for next year's top 10 list.

— By Charles Mandel

Lori Cullen

Uneven Hill
Independent
LC2004

If music had the power to reduce stress, this would be the album to do it. Combining elements of folk and jazz, Uneven Hill has a spiritual, mystical quality that makes for a relaxing listen. Instead of using a loud, in-your-face approach, Lori holds our interest with unpredictable song structures, a wide range of instruments from pedal steel to omnichord to synth to horns, and ghostly vocals that

rise from behind the melody. In the vein of Daniel Lanois and Michelle Shocked's *Dub Natural*, Lori Cullen's effort could add atmosphere to a construction site.

Two tracks stand out in particular. *Hot Dog Day*, Uneven Hill's rocker, takes us back to childhood, evoking familiar images like piggy-backs, bristol board projects, and cherry bombs. Kat Goldman and Ruth Frolic join her on the hauntingly beautiful traditional number *In the Gloaming*.

All in all, if you dig poetic lyrics set to atmospheric music, this is the record for you. Lori Cullen is a true artist who has created an important work of contemporary Canadian music.

— By Mary Beth Carty

Gregg Lawless

Something Beautiful

Grafton Music
GPL-2004

Always a bride's maid, never a bride. Is this fate for Gregg Lawless? Shelagh Rogers' tagged Gregg as "the best singer you've never heard." But the new CD, *Something Beautiful*, is not meant to languish at home on Saturday night. It is too bouncy and beautiful not to be a bride — at first blush.

First, there's something borrowed. The cutesy studio banter, for one. And echoes for another. There are so many echoes! Early songs echo Beatle tunes replete with garbled telephone mics and fade out, fade ins. There are shades of funky blues in the later songs. And the old is bar room rock from its heyday. The new is pop production with folksy background instrumentation. Right in the middle of big band productions there are riffs and licks from the dobro, banjo, an accordion, or mandolin. It is tasteful, but confusing. Gregg, commit. Forsake this transgenre songwriting! Groom yourself for greatness.

— By Les Pearson

Alfie Smith

Buckshot Blues

Big Dum Ox Productions

Don't let the album title, or the cover art, fool you, *Buckshot Blues* isn't a blues album. A quarter of the 16 tracks are blues songs (the two covers are of traditional blues songs), but the rest of the album is Smith-written, with a single collaboration.

He plays some bluesy dobro, but this is primarily a folk album. Smith's a decent picker, also accompanying himself on a flat top, and banjo, but his voice is his most notable instrument — a smooth, rich baritone for which the word 'mellifluous' was coined. However, his singing has a way to go to becoming the instrument that it can be; I found myself thinking 'he's listening to himself, rather than just singing' unlike another fine voice, such as Brent Titcomb. That said, when he gets there, he's going to be worth hearing.

The original songs could use some work, and because they're original, they deserve comment. Several are quite good, but overall, Smith has a tendency to allow questionable rhymes and



Gregg Lawless

cliché expressions into the mix. Back to the cover art — he looks like he's still in his 20s, and he'll be worth watching

— By Stuart Adams.

Jack Johnson

On and On

Universal
4400750122

Hawaii isn't exactly a hot bed of musical styles — Gabby Pahinui and the slack key guitar, and Don Ho, are probably the two most notable exports. But Jack Johnson is doing a good job of putting the islands on the musical map, starting with the 2001 *Brushfire Fairytales*, that recently achieved platinum sales in the U.S.

He's followed it up with *On and On*, using the same line-up as the first album. The music is a sort of funky 'beach blues' — he draws from jazz and folk, as well, and combines spare and mellow instrumentation with a soft, dusky tenor that floats along over the mostly-acoustic arrangements, never getting too excited.

He writes all his own material, and I can't say that I'm bowled over by his lyrics. The subject matter varies from relationships to the state of the world, and he approaches them seriously, but somehow, they just don't conjure up compelling feelings, or images.

By Stuart Adams.

Alistair McCulloch

Wired Up
Fellside
FECD179

There's sturdy stuff on this disc from vibrant fiddler McCulloch and his full creel of tuned in musicians.

Alistair has a lovely tone and a clean, strong touch on 33 tunes clustered in 12 sets. The materi-

al ranges through the peaks and glens of Scots music, many of the compositions contemporary, a few originals, with a decent splash of pieces from the tradition. Three sweet airs breathe tenderly amid the largely vigorous sets that dominate the album.

The rich colour of the tunes seeps through in some of their titles: The Road to Mount Tinnie Run, Miss Stewart of Grantully, Violet Tulloch's Hornpipe, The Lintie, and the tour de force closer, The Hanged Man's Reel.

There's a tantalizing edge to Alistair's uplifting playing, full of authority and purpose. This is very enjoyable music, powerfully played and bursting with the joy of a cracking musician in full flow.

—By David Ingram

Cris Cuddy

Keep The Change/Nowhere Town
Vanishing Castle Recording
VC-55

This double CD should certainly put Toronto-based Cris Cuddy on the map. The leader of the popular Canadian indie-roots-rock-reggae band, Max Mouse and The Gorillas, steps out in a big way. The first disc, *Keep The Change*, shows Cuddy the singer/songwriter in various settings with Prairie Oyster, Andrew Hardin and the Tom Russell Band, with guests like legendary guitarist Albert Lee, Kevin Breit, and Gene Taylor, piano player for The Fabulous Thunderbirds. The second disc, *Nowhere Town*, puts Cuddy in Nashville with the equally talented backup crew of George Bradfute playing everything from guitars, bass, keyboards, banjo and singing harmony vocals, with Fats Kaplin on steel guitar, fiddle and violin, and Steve Erbe on drums. There's lots of fine original songs and an interesting cover of the Jagger and Richards *Tell Me*. Cuddy's mentor, the late great songwriter, Mickey Newbury, would be proud.

—By Barry Hammond

Peter Haines

Footprints
Independent PM11132

Peter Haines is a recent immigrant to Canada who came on a year's teaching exchange in 1999 and fell in love with the Bulkley Valley, in British Columbia where He now lives. On this debut, produced by David Essig, Haines draws from his experiences in both Australia and Canada, usually dealing with the triumph of the human spirit, and "a simple act of kindness" as one song is aptly titled.

Musically it features strong backup performances from David Essig on steel guitar, mandolin and weissenborn, with Roxi Dykstra on viola and backing vocals. Peter's delivery is always heartfelt if somewhat earnest. He sings in such a sweet voice that, unfortunately to me, it over prettifies some of the songs' topics, so that at times the emotion generated seems saccharine, rather than true.

It comes across as a pleasant album, even though some of the songs, like *Footprints*, about the taking away of aboriginal children from their parents;

are definitely not. Peter yearns to and succeeds at reaffirming the hopefulness in life.

—By les siemieniuk

Abdul Tee-Jay

Palm Wine A Go-Go
Respect Records
FSCD101

First of all, *Palm Wine A Go-Go* gets my vote for best record title of the year. That said, what do you expect from Sierra Leone? Probably not this sunny, lilting Caribbean sound. What's the deal with that? Freetown, Sierra Leone's principal city, received its name from Caribbean slave immigrants who also brought the Trinidadian calypso sound along with them. Palm wine music is what results when people there get together to share a bottle of the fermented sap juice of the oil palm tree, and it's the sound Abdul Tee-Jay grew up hearing.

Tee-Jay moved to the U.S. to study economics, but he never lost his taste for music. Ultimately, he realized no one played his home country's tunes, so he resolved to do so. At the height of the world music boom in the 1980s he achieved a small measure of fame with his band, Rokoto. *Palm Wine A Go-Go*, his first recording since then, mixes the repetitive sound and joyful chants of African music with the spare harmonies of the Caribbean. It's a lovely, gentle sound: you should grab a copy of *Palm Wine A Go-Go* and drink it up.

—By Charles Mandel

Old Man Luedecke

Mole in the Ground"
Independent

Old Man Luedecke's solo debut album is a real fine record. Clawhammer banjo accompanies Chris Luedecke's soft tenor singing on a collection of his original tunes that follow close in a line behind the Carter Family, Bob Dylan, and that ramblor, Jack Elliott. Clearly a strong son of the old

folk tradition, his pre-truck banjo picking style is tasteful and gracious, reminiscent more of Ola Belle Reed than Scruggs or Reno, though he lets loose for a fairly rip-snorting version of *Mole in the Ground*. Chris' lyrics run from lucid and rhythmic to wryly humorous: yodel phrases become love songs in "Yodelady—yodelady of my dreams—and you make my blood run clean," consumer culture is slyly criticized in *The First Day of Fall* and *The Cable Blues* ("see me fishing at the break of day...they took my cable away—everyone's so damn concerned that my bills is paid"). *One Time in Rome* and *Sugarman* both carry a kind of romance and pleasure that is both teasing and touching. Chris' voice is lovely, his songwriting skill exceptional, and his banjo playing just right for this old-timey, conversational album

—By Annie Clifford

Jeszcze Raz

Balagane
Ben Voila

To the uninitiated, Jeszcze Raz sounds like a Tom Waits record, had he died and come back as Charles Aznavour. Wonky rhythms, European instrumentation, rich harmonies. As it turns out, it is the multicultural brainchild of Montreal's Paul Kunigis — a Polish expatriate and pianist with a passionate voice and varied taste in musical styles embracing Jewish, Gypsy and Arabic folk as merged together with elements of French cabaret, Dixieland jazz and gospel-tinged blues. The title, *Balagane*, comes from the Hebrew and Polish word for bordello, which does a fine job of summing up the steamy, somewhat eclectic stew of musical influences and cultures displayed here. Their second release, *Balagane* speaks in four languages: Polish, Hebrew, French and Arabic and blends accordion and harmonium with clarinet, trombone, acoustic guitar, fiddle, percussion and bass. Dark, moody and colourful, the listener can't help but feel like a stowaway on a gypsy caravan — coursing the slightly mystical underbelly of a lifestyle that embraces love, life and liberty above all else. Produced by Yves Desrosiers of Lhasa fame, who contributes guitar as well.

—By Eric Thorm

Ellis Hooks

Up Your Mind
Evidence
ECD 26129-2

Seemingly equal parts rocker and soul man, Alabama-born Hooks brings something new to the mix. This is soul-blues but delivered with a refreshing difference by a young man charged with gospel delivery, gifted with a voice recalling Wilson Pickett and Little Milton, and driven by a guitar sound that holds its own in rock circles. Thirteen originals — with distinctive hooks all their own — are served up with grit, grease and — above



Cris Cuddy



January 24/04 Trevor Mills
 February 21/04 Suzie Vinnick
 March 6/04 J.P. Cormier
 March 27/04 Cyril McPhee
 April 17/04 Benefit Concert*
 May 1/04 Finest Kind
 May 15/04 Bram Taylor
 June 5/04 Mark Haines
 & Tom Leighton

* April 17 Benefit for & performance by The Toronto Women's Sword Dance Team

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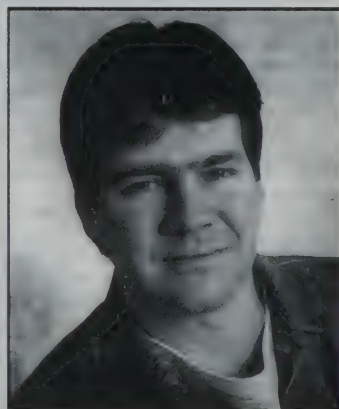
Sun. Jan. 11 - April Verch
 Sun. Feb. 15 - Vin Garbutt
 Sun. March 14 - Tanglefoot
 Sun. April 25 - Brian Pickell Band
 Sun. May 16 - Bram Taylor
 Sun. June 6 - Friends of Fiddler's Green

Sun. Sept. 19 - Maria Dunn
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Vin Garbutt

all – passion, heralding a fresh talent born of a deep-rooted, southern groove. Already nominated for a Grammy, Hooks is poised to inherit turf since vacated by Eddie Hinton and Pop Staples, loaded with the potential to claim it as his own. One spin of *Controlling Picasso* will tell you something is definitely up here. His second release, *Up Your Mind* serves notice that Hooks is a talented contender. Able assistance by producer and guitarist, Jon Tiven, adds an allegiance to the power of the compositions as well as an extra element of guitar muscle, adding teeth to Hooks' brand of soulfulness.

– By Eric Thom

Terry Morrison

High Mileage Soul
Independent
TMCD333 2003

Morrison's new album spans the (microscopically thin) gap between country and folk really nicely. She's clearly a prairie girl all the way. This record reminds me of a New Year's Eve spent in northern New Brunswick, line dancing my way through a Molson induced stupor to a band set up immediately next to the VLTS. *Standing on the Ground* is definitely the pop hit of this collection: a quality arrangement of a pretty catchy song that opens up her vocals into something nicely solid and dynamic. *Ol' Black Coal* is the other vocal stunner, featuring herself on lead and harmonies. This album features plenty of great hook lines and lots of lyrical emotion, though maybe without an enormous amount of originality; generally, she pulls a bit too much on over-poetic vocabulary like "love" or "soul" without enough concrete story to give them interesting meaning. Her soft guitar strumming is matched with consistently boom-chick drumming by Pete Paetz, careful bass and great singing by John Gorman, and some smoothly executed, if a

bit too standard, lead guitar from Chris Smith. The guest musicians are great: notable include Kevin Cook's electric guitar, Gary Bowman's honky-tonk piano, Bob Tildsley's lovely trumpet playing, and Maria Dunn's tasteful and touching accordion (that Dunn—always adding so much subtle and beautiful mood with that squeezebox of hers). While this record doesn't inspire my "soul" to "love" (boom-chick-boom), I'm quite interested to see what she'll do next.

– By Annie Clifford

Anderson & Sloski

Footwork
Make It Real
M1R 005)

Fans of B3 and drummer combos take note. This record kicks with a mighty groove that doesn't let up for more than 65 minutes! Anderson wields the soulful fire and funk of McGriff, McDuff and Holmes on this spirited release that sounds so much larger than anything four hands and four feet should be able to accomplish. Recorded "live and off the floor" the results speak volumes to their workmanlike regimen of playing live. There'd be no other way to explain their combined ability to attack such time-honoured cover tunes as Stevie Wonder's *Superstition*, Dr. John's *Right Place, Wrong Time* and McGriff's *Gospel Time* and marry them, seamlessly, to their own material in one continuous-sounding set. Original compositions like *Chillin'*, *Where There Is Love* (with its *Whiter Shade of Pale* reference) and the title track go a long way towards lifting this largely instrumental release higher than you might expect to be taken by any "duo". Guest vocals from Steven Ambrose (*The Lincolns*) and George Oliver (*Mandala*) provide another angle of interest to the project, yet it is the smooth simplicity of Anderson's '58 Cherrywood B3, doubling up on foot-bass, and Sloski's precise time-marking that make *Footwork* so memorable. A definite party-pleaser.

– By Eric Thom

Vin Garbutt

The Vin Garbutt Songbook Vol. 1
Home Roots
HRCD016

The Vin Garbutt Songbook Vol.1 is intended as a *Best of* of sorts, with a companion book that gives insights into when and where the songs were written, with a Vol. 2 in the works. Eight of the songs are taken from previous CD's, and nine are from old vinyl LP's that are no longer available; they had to be re-recorded for this project. This is a man who has been in the folk business for over 30 years, and who is wildly popular in Europe, with a waiting list of clubs wanting to book him. Yet he is still relatively unknown on this side of the pond.

He also is an amazing songwriter, whose socially conscious and strident views have got him effectively banned from half the folk festivals in Britain. But he does come up with some lovely and fun ways to get his point across. *Filipino Maid*

"observing the world from her flip-flops" explores the plight of immigrant workers with zip and flair. *Dormantown Jimmy* is about the lack of jobs for British youth, sung in a Border ballad style. The only unfortunate thing is that some of the production and instrumentation is so dated it makes him sound like a Northern Cat Stevens, only with better written songs.

My favourites are the last three, and not only because they are live recordings and spared some of the awful production. *Danny Danielle* is a catchy tune with some haunting whistle playing, and *One Legged Beggar* is a sad and moving song about the poor.

A very good introduction to Vin's music if you haven't heard it before, and a nice cross-section of some of his best if you have. Best listened to closely so you can absorb all the wit and humanity enclosed within.

– By Shawna Biomonte

Various Artists

Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Western Manitoba
Falcon Productions
FPCD 387

Anne Lederman deserves a medal for the courage and conviction for releasing these remarkable recordings. Clearly of little commercial value, *Old Native and Métis Fiddling in Western Manitoba* is as culturally rich a release as any coveted Folkways collection. Beautifully packaged with extensive notes from Lederman detailing the history of this unique fiddling style that began with the arrival of French and Scottish fur traders in Canada in the late 18th century but then nurtured by the Ojibwa and the descendants of marriages between Europeans and First Nations, the Métis. The playing is not polished but spirited and it's presented as it was played at dances or in kitchens. Some times the playing stops abruptly for apparently no reason. Yet there is bags of charm throughout the numerous tunes spread out over two discs. Anyone with slightest interest in folk fiddling ought to latch onto this immediately. It's a really remarkable slice of Canadiana.

– By Roddy Campbell.

Murray Boal and the Cultivators

Bud's Sawmill
Independent
BT1003

Murray Boal sings his rural-themed songs with a slight country twang reminiscent of The Band's Levon Helm, backed by the steady rhythm and pretty harmonies of the Cultivators. Although there's nothing terribly original here, this album has its charm. You can tell that these B.C. farm boys are having a good time and that they want their audiences to have fun too. I would definitely dance at their live show.

– By Mary Beth Cary

59
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Recordings



RENDEZVOUS FOLK! wrap-up: a resounding success!

by Lucinda Chodan

That's how attendees and performers alike have described the third annual **RendezVous Folk!** gathering in Montréal this past November.

More than 300 people took part in the event, which was organized by Folk Alliance Canada and its local partners **Folquébec** and the Société pour la promotion de la danse traditionnelle québécoise (SPDTQ).

RendezVous Folk! featured three nights of **showcases** by 24 artists that brought together Canadian and international presenters and industry representatives. Days were filled with helpful and informative **workshops**, and much productive schmoozing took place in the bar at the Wyndham Hotel, site of the event.

Attendees also benefited from events coinciding with RendezVous Folk!, including the **Exposed Roots** showcases organized by the Canada Council for the Arts and featuring Canadian world-music performers.

As always, the showcases were a highlight. Folk Alliance Canada artists featured **The Bills** (formerly The Bill Hilly Band), **Veda Hille** and **Harry Manx** from B.C.; **The McDades** from Alberta; **Gérald Laroche** and **Nathan** from Manitoba; the **Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band**, **Galitcha**, **Maza Mezé** and **Swamperella** from Ontario; **Michael Jerome Browne**, **Monica Freire**, **Genticorum** and **Le Vent du nord** from Québec; and **Lennie Gallant** from P.E.I.

Attendees were also treated to Québécois music and dance, thanks to showcases presented by Folquébec. Those artists included **Rob Lutes**, **Ipso Facto**, **Les Tireux d'roches**, the **Guy Donis Trio**, **Sandy Silva** and **Laura Risk**, **Ivy**, **The Echo Hunters**, **DaZoque!** and **Kleztory**.

The event featured the first-ever **Prix Folqui**, created by Folquébec to honor Québec residents who embody and enrich the spirit of folk music in the province. Inaugural recipients were legendary Montréal singer-songwriter **Penny Lang**; singer, accordionist and musical preservationist **Danielle Martineau**; and accordionist and world-music pioneer **Joaquín Diaz**.

Feedback from attendees has been very positive. There was an unusually high ratio of Canadian and international presenters to artists. Among the **success stories** were bookings at European, U.S. and Canadian festivals; a record deal for an unsigned artist; and songwriting and performance collaborations between several artists. There was even a cameo appearance by American folk legend **John Prine**, who was performing in town and staying at the Wyndham. He hung out briefly with his band at the Friday late-night jam, adding a bit of celebrity dazzle to the next morning's gossip.

In some ways, RendezVous Folk! served as a dress rehearsal for the 17th annual **North American Folk Music & Dance Alliance** conference, slated to take place in **Montréal in 2005** along with world-music conference **Strictly Mundial**. The event will take place at the same venue, the Wyndham Hotel.

Representatives of the North American Folk Alliance executive attended RendezVous Folk! and pronounced themselves extremely satisfied with the organizational skills exhibited by the team that put the event together.

Thanks go out to Derek Andrews (FAC President) for handling the logistics of presenter/buyer

attendance; to organizing team Gilles Garand (V.P. of FAC and Folquébec board member), Heidi Fleming (FAC, Folquébec), Dana Whittle (FAC, Folquébec) and Mary Harris (Folquébec); as well as the dedicated FAC board members, with a special tip o' the hat to Mark Smith, Gene Swimmer, Sam Baardman, Steve Horne and Kevin Walters.

Partners and sponsors included Folquébec, SPDTQ, SOCAN, Department of Canadian Heritage, the Ministère de la culture et des communications du Québec, the City of Montreal, DFAIT, Canada Council for the Arts, Factor, East Coast Music Association, North American Folk Music & Dance Alliance, CKUT, RSB Disques, Institut Trebas, L'Épigraphie, Ontario Council of Folk Festivals, Ottawa Folk Festival, Bignote Entertainment, Heather Kelly Communications, Steve's Music, Les Brasseurs du Nord, Nutshell Music and CBC Radio-Canada.

The next RendezVous Folk! will take place in **Halifax**, Nova Scotia from November 18-21, 2004; if you're interested in knowing more, visit the Folk Alliance Canada website and click on the link. You can learn more about Folk Alliance Montréal 2005 (or volunteer) at www.folk.org.

Lucinda Chodan is a journalist and lyricist who works with Montréal folkgrass band Steel Rail and singer-songwriter-guitarist-husband Dave Clarke. She can be reached at lucinda@steelrail.ca.

Folk Alliance Canada is the official Canadian branch of the North American Folk Music & Dance Alliance.



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ISBN D 85418-188-1

Reviewed By, Pete Fyfe

I first met A L Lloyd at Southwark College (London) folk festival many years ago. Originally I only intended to meet him as he had been credited by Steeleye Span as a major source for their repertoire. After that initial meeting I met Bert several times and having purchased his fine tome of songs I became more and more interested in the background to the stories. Now back in print The Penguin book of English folk songs (as it was then known) is exactly what it says on the modern cover. If, like me you were brought up on a diet of Steeleye and Fairport etc a majority of the content will already be known to you. *The Blacksmith, A Sailor's Life, Long Lankin and All Things Are Quite Silent* are just some of the gems collected here. Martin Carthy in his introduction states that this collection of songs was meatier than other prior publications and drawing on some of the subject matter still has relevance today. In fact, The Sun newspaper would have a field day with banner headlines screaming bloody murder from every column inch. As I say this (for many of us) was where folk music really began. With the gore and guts culture that seems to be influencing some of folk's young upstarts and yes I'm talking of the likes of Jim Moray this is a great starting point. A resounding slap on the back to the EFDSS for getting it back in print - it really is a classic!

A Guitarmaker's Canvas The Inlay Art of Grit Laskin

by Grit Laskin

Backbeat Books. \$74.95

Reviewed By, Barry Hammond

Besides being a performing and recording musician and the co-founder of Borealis Records, the prolific Grit Laskin is also a luthier (guitar builder) and practitioner of the fine art of inlay—the insertion of colored material, usually pearlescent shell, wood, metal or some kind of stone, which can also be engraved in an artistic pattern or depiction, into some other material, in this case the headstock, neck, or body of a guitar. Laskin is a master of this art and has received the Saidye Bronfman Award

For Excellence, Canada's highest craft honor.

His work resides in The

Museum of Civilization and has been exhibited in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the American Craft Museum in New York.

This book, lavishly illustrated with over 90 inlays depicted in colour, lets the reader explore in loving detail Laskin's work over the past fifteen years. On top of the sheer visual feast of the photographs, Laskin tells in his own words the story of how he became a guitar builder, discusses the specifics of how it's done—the materials and tools used—and the detailed history or stories behind each individual project in a "gallery of his canvases." There's also an essay by Chuck Ericson on the

history and theory of inlay in general. Laskin explains why he considers what he does an art as opposed to a craft. Craft he theorizes, is merely decoration, while art communicates, has something to say, and engages the viewer in its story. Craftsman also repeat, sometimes making one pattern over and over on numerous items. Each Laskin inlay is unique, a one-of-a-kind object of art.

What makes Laskin's art really unique is the type of "biographically intimate and psychologically introspective," portraits he sometimes paints of the guitar's owners, those who have commissioned his talents, and the layered symbolism within the work itself. Laskin also imbues his work with a sense of movement, narrative, and a feeling that the action continues beyond the "frame," taking the viewer from the object of the guitar out into the surrounding world.

Not to be overlooked either, is the fact that Laskin is a fine draftsman. Each work has the feel of great line drawing in the way that illustrators such as Maxfield Parrish, Alphonse Mucha, or the modern illustrators of graphic novels like Daniel Clowes, Art Spiegelman, or Chester Brown, have a feel for two-dimensional composition. Laskin also has a discerning eye for the way the inherent reflective properties, textures, and grain of his materials can be used to enhance the illusion within a picture. This is a gorgeous book, a really great gift for anyone interested in either the art of inlay or beautiful handmade guitars.

All Music Guide To Country Music: The Definitive Guide

Edited by: Vladimir Bogdanov, Chris

Woodstra and Stephen Erlewine

Backbeat Books. \$27.95 (U.S.)

Reviewed By, Roddy Campbell

Any resource that carries 'definitive' in its title invites serious scrutiny. Anoraks, obviously, will turn it inside out to see if it stands scrutiny. Well, does it? The answer is a resounding, mostly. While there's no mention of either the Sadies, the Good Brothers or Cowboy Celtic, and The Great Speckled Bird receives meagre footnotes, the All Music Guide To Country remains incredibly impressive. At almost 1000 pages, it covers the entire history of country music from its old-time, mountain music origins through to the contemporary pop that passes for the genre today. It also veers off into every associated category from bluegrass to the Bakersfield Sound, from honky tonk to jug band, from yodeling to truck driving... And amidst all this, are several thoughtful essays on such topics as Country on Film and Austin's Cosmic Cowboys.

Largely though, the All Music Guide is a compendium of record reviews – an exhaustive 10,000-plus in all by over 1200 acts. Essential albums are noted for every artist. Actually, it even includes essential albums for each category. Fairly lengthy critiques come rated out of five. As with all such undertakings compiled by various contributors, the ratings are inconsistent. Five stars are all too frequently handed out for the occasional dubi-

ous entities – Bob Dylan's *New Morning* anyone? Still, the All Music Guide To Country is a treasure trove of information – a wonderfully diverse, entertaining and richly rewarding resource for even the most cursory of musical tastes.

Alias Bob Dylan – Revisited

By Stephen Scobie

Red Deer Press. \$24.95

Reviewed By, Barry Hammond

In 1991, Red Deer Press published Stephen Scobie's *Alias Bob Dylan*. This spring, the press has published a much revised and expanded edition. The new version offers two-and-a-half times more material than the first, due in no small part to the proliferation of web sites devoted to the new science of Dylanology – the study of all things related to Bob Dylan.

Scobie, himself a writer, poet, professor of literature at The University of Victoria, and self-admitted Dylanologist, says, "The first edition was written pretty much in isolation, whereas this one feeds off all the internet resources and my extended contacts with other writers about Dylan around the world."

It also benefits from several interviews Scobie did with Allen Ginsberg in the early 1990's. At one point, he was planning a separate book on the relationship between the two. That didn't work out, but it does come as a twenty page chapter in the new edition, one of the more interesting sections in the book.

There's also a whole chapter on *Visions of Johanna*. He reserves it and several other key songs – representative of the distinctive periods of Dylan's career – for a section called Moments & Milestones

Scobie divides that career into three phases: creation, commitment, and performance, looks at Dylan as both prophet and trickster, and also explores the ideas of the mask, alias, ghost, signature and self-portrait evident in his work.

Finally, there's material on the last two albums, *Time Out of Mind*, *Love And Theft* (which surely rate as two of the greatest career resurrections in popular music history) as well as the new film, *Masked & Anonymous*.

While much of the analysis in the book is certainly scholarly and owes a debt to New Criticism, structuralism, and post-structuralism critics like Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida, Scobie is a meticulous researcher and writer and his analysis of Dylan and his music is thorough, exhaustive, and sheds some real light on the intricacies of Dylan's output over the years. A must for anyone with an interest in Dylan or Dylanology.

61

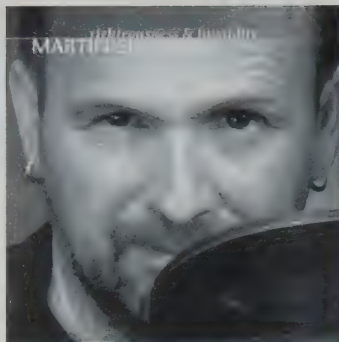
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

Books

Roch Parisien. Radio Programmer, CBC's *Galaxie*. The Be Good Tanyas, *Chinatown* (Nettwerk); Blackie & The Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Bruce Cockburn, *You've Never Seen Everything* (True North); Fred Eaglesmith, *Balin'* (AML); Oh Susanna, *Oh Susanna* (Nettwerk); Oysterband, *Rise Above* (True North); Josh Ritter, *Hello Starling* (Signature Sounds); Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (True North); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *World Without Tears* (Lost Highway). **New Discoveries:** Shannon Lyon, Josh Ritter, Miranda Stone. **Live:** Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, Emmylou Harris, Fiftymen and Andy Stochansky.

Tim Readman. Musician, Penguin Eggs contributor. Afro Celts, *Seed* (Real World); The Arrogant Worms, *Semi-Conducted* (Independent); Kim Barlow, *Gingerbread* (Caribou); Eliza Carthy, *Anglicana* (Topic); Paul Mounsey, *City of Walls* (Iona); Old Blind Dogs, *The Gab o Mey* (Green Linnet); Various Artists, *Celtic Compass* (Compass); Waterson:Carthy, *A Dark Light* (Topic); Gillian Welch, *Soul Journey* (Stony Plain); Gabriel Yacoub, *The Simple Things We Said* (Les Choses Les Plus Simple). **New Discoveries:** Cleia, *La Volée de Castors*. Julie Murphy and Dylan Fowler. **Live:** Billy Bragg, Harry Manx, Richard Thompson.

Mike Regenstreif. Radio Host, Folk Roots/Folk Branches, CKUT, Montreal. Freelance Journalist, Montreal Gazette, Sing Out! Johnny Cash, *Cash Unearthed* (American/Lost Highway); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker); Margot Leverett & the Klezmer Mountain Boys, *Margot Leverett & the Klezmer Mountain Boys* (Traditional Crossroads); Geoff Muldaur's Futuristic Ensemble, *Private Astronomy* (Edge); Tom Russell, *Modern Art* (HighTone); Hans Theessink, *Songs from the Southland* (Blue Groove); Various Artists, *Shout, Sister, Shout! A Tribute to Sister Rosetta Tharpe* (Stony Plain); Various Artists, *Spain In My Heart: Songs of the Spanish Civil War*



(Appleseed); Wayfaring Strangers, *This Train* (Rounder); Wenzel, *Ticky Tock: Wenzel Sings Woody Guthrie* (Conträr). **New Discoveries:** Bill Jones, Po' Girl, Wenzel. **Live:** Emmylou Harris, John Prine, Tom Russell.

Vicky Rogers. Megatunes music store, Edmonton. Blackie & the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Al Green, *I Can't Stop* (Blue Note); Ben Harper, *Diamonds on the Inside* (Virgin); Jayhawks, *Rainy Day Music* (Lost Highway); Daniel Lanois, *Shine* (Epitaph); Le Vent Du Nord, *Maudite Mission!* (Borealis); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Lyle Lovett, *My Baby Don't Tolerate* (MCA); Minus 5, *Down with Wilco* (Yep Roc); The Thorns, *The Thorns* (Columbia). **New Discoveries:** Le Vent Du Nord, Lee Boys, The Henrys. **Live:** Solomon Burke, Jayhawks, Daniel Lanois.

Les Siemieniuk. General Manager, The Calgary Folk Music Festival, Freelance Broadcaster, Penguin Eggs contributor. Dan Bern and the IJCB, *Fleeting Days* (Messenger); Ruthie Foster, *Runaway Soul* (Blue Corn); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Michael Franti and Spearhead, *Everybody Deserves Music* (BooBoo Wax); Thea Gilmore, *Avalanche* (Compass); The Paperboys, *Dilapidated Beauty* (True North); Martin Simpson, *Righteousness and Humidity* (Red House); Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros, *Streetcore* (Hellcat); Ben Sures, *Goodbye Pretty Girl* (Independent); Richard Thompson, *The Old Kit Bag* (True North). **New Discoveries:** Thea Gilmore, Caitlin Cary, Jack Johnson. **Live:** Bob Geldof, Jackie Leven, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.

Dugg Simpson. Artistic Director, The Vancouver Folk Music Festival. Autorickshaw, *Autorickshaw* (tala-wallah); Monica Friebe, *Bahiatronica* (Independent); Ray Wylie Hubbard, *Growl*, (Philo); Patty Larkin, *Red = Luck* (Vanguard); Lhasa, *The Living Road* (Audiogramme); Enoch Kent, *Love, Lust & Loathing* (Second Avenue); John Mellencamp, *Trouble No More* (Columbia); Kelly Joe Phelps *Slingshot Professionals* (Ryko); Po' Girl, *Po' Girl* (Jericho Beach); DJ Cheb I Sabbah, *As Far As* (Six Degrees). **New**



Discoveries: Kaki King, Warsaw Village Band, Kim Sinh. **Live:** Sarah Jane Morris, Michael Franti and Spearhead, Kelly Joe Phelps with Zubot and Dawson.

Rana Sodhi. Artistic Director, The Flying Cloud Folk Club, Toronto: The BeBop Cowboys, *Some Kind of Fantasy*, (Independent); Andrew Collins and Mark Roy, *Likewise* (Independent); Colonel Tom and the Loose Cannons, *Songs For the Young 'Uns* (Run Mountain); Finest Kind, *Silk and Spices* (Fallen Angle); Flapjack, *Happy Slappy Flap Jack Hut* (Cabin Fever Music); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Enoch Kent, *Songs of Love, Lust and Loathing* (Second Avenue); Paul Mounsey, *City of Walls* (Iona); Tanglefoot, *Captured Live* (Borealis); Various Artists, *Living 'Losin' Lovin' - Songs of the Louvin Brothers* (Universal). **New Discoveries:** Maeve Donnelly, Fred Eaglesmith (solo), Das macht SHOW. **Live:** Teada, Tanglefoot, Eryn Marshall and Chris Coole.

Sandy Stiff & Richard Thornley. Radio Hosts, Before The Deluge, CJSR, Edmonton. Penguin Eggs contributors. Amaldo Antunes, Carlinhos Brown, & Marisa Monte, *Tribalistas* (EMI); Danu, *The Road Less Traveled* (Shanachie); Bill Frisell, *The Intercontinentals* (Nonesuch); Gotan Project, *La Revancha Del Tango* (Ya Basta); Lunasa, *Redwood* (Green Linnet); Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); Souad Massi, *Deb* (Universal); Shooglenifty, *The Arms Dealer's Daughter* (Compass); Chris Smith, *Train Home* (Hightone); Le Vent Du Nord, *Maudite Moisson!* (Borealis). **New Discoveries:** Back of the Moon, Teada, The Demon Barbers. **Live:** Filippa Gambetta, Back of the Moon, La Volees d' Castors.

Paul Symes. Artistic Director, The Black Sheep Inn, Wakefield, Quebec: Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Jim Bryson, *North Side Benches* (Orange); Calexico, *Feast of Wire* (Quarterstick); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Do Make Say Think, *Winter Hymn* (Constellation); Michael Franti & Spearhead, *Everyone Deserves Music* (BMG); Daniel Lanois, *Shine* (Epitaph); Kate Maki,

Rae Spoon



Throw Some Dirt on Me

Confusion Unlimited (Independent); Mighty Popo, *Ngagara*, (CBC Records); Rae Spoon, *Throw Some Dirt on Me* (Che Work). **New Discoveries:** King Sunshine, Juana Molina, Gods of Taste. **Live:** Dan Bern, Do Make Say Think, Daniel Lanois.

Brenda and Roman Tacik. Radio Hosts: Regina's Mighty Shores, CJTR, Regina. Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem, *Gambling Eden* (Signature); Bottleneck, *Late Nights, Early Mornings* (Black Hen); Kris Delmhorst, *Songs for a Hurricane* (Signature); Ruthie Foster, *Runaway Soul* (Blue Com); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing the Water* (Borealis); Chris Smither, *Train Home* (Hightone); Ben Sures, *Goodbye Pretty Girl* (Independent); Undertakin' Daddies, *Devil in the Rearview* (Caribou); Various Artists, *Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot* (Borealis/NorthernBlues). Wayfaring Strangers, *This Train* (Rounder). **New Discoveries:** Das Macht Show!, Steve Slade, Rae Spoon. **Live:** The Bill Hilly Band, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, The Silver Hearts.

Eric Thom. Penguin Eggs contributor. Tab Benoit & Jimmy Thackery, *Whiskey Store Live* (Telarc); Boobie Browne & The Onions, *Birth of the Chickenpick* (Independent); John Campbelljohn, *Under The Blue Covers* (Nood Records); Morgan Davis, *Painkiller* (Electro); The Gibson Brothers, *Bona Fide* (Sugar Hill); Emmylou Harris, *Stumble Into Grace* (Nonesuch); John Mayall, *Rockin' The Roadshow* (Sanctuary); Harvey Mandel, *NightFire* (Electric Snakes Studios); Joan Osborne, *How Sweet It Is* (Koch); Doc Watson, *Trouble In Mind: The Doc Watson Country Blues Collection, 1964-1998* (Sugar Hill). **New Discoveries:** Bobby Messano, Cosmo St. Clair, Big Daddy Shad. **Live:** Deborah Coleman, John Campbelljohn Trio, Acoustic Stawbs.

Jan Vanderhorst. Radio Host: Just Us Folk, CK-PC-FM, Brantford. Blackie & the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Greg Brown, Garnet Rogers, Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman, *Live At The Black Sheep* (Snow Goose); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Laker Music); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing The Water* (Borealis); Lynn Harrison, *Learning Curve* (Lynoleum Music); David Mallett, *Artist In Me* (North Road); Ellis Paul and Vance Gilbert, *Side Of The Road* (Philo); Martha's

Trouble, *Still* (zoomTone); Tanglefoot, *Captured Alive* (Borealis) Various Artists: *Beautiful: A Tribute To Gordon Lightfoot* (Borealis/NorthernBlues). **New Discoveries:** Stacy Earle and Mark Stuart, Entourloupe, Groovely. **Live:** Janis Ian, David Francey, Lynn Miles.

Dean Verge. Artistic Director, Rasputin's Folk Cafe, Ottawa: Ian Bell, *Signor Farini and Other Adventures* (Free Range); Kevin Cardamore, *Steel Strings* (Guitar Nine); The Creaking Tree String Quartette, *The Creaking Tree String Quartette* (Independent); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing The Water* (Borealis); Finest Kind, *Silks & Spices* (Fallen Angle Music); Bill Garrett & Sue Lothrop, *Red Shoes* (Borealis); Pat Moore, *The Time's Never Been Better* (Independent); Shelley Posen, *The Old Songs' Home* (Well Done Music); Rae Spoon, *Throw Some Dirt On Me* (Rae Spoon); Writers' Bloc, *Christmas Goose* (Writers' Bloc). **New Discoveries:** Rae Spoon, Anne Louise Genest, Teye & Viva El Flamenco. **Live:** Ian Bell, Bill Garrett & Sue Lothrop, The Creaking Tree String Quartette.

Wendy Wall. Radio Host, Rootopia, CFUV, Victoria. Be Good Tanyas, *Chinatown* (Nettwerk); Ray Bonneville, *Roll It Down* (Stony Plain); Clarence Bucaro, *Sweet Corn* (Festival); Chatham County Line, *Chatham County Line* (Bonfire); Creaking Tree String Quartet, *Creaking Tree String Quartet* (Festival); Fred Eaglesmith, *Bailin'* (AML); Ox, *Revival* (Independent); Chris Smither, *Train Home* (Hightone); Undertakin' Daddies, *Devil In The Rearview* (Caribou); Eric Westbury, *Burnt Tongues & Blue Truths* (Barrel Town). **New Discoveries:** Serena Ryder, Jeremy Fisher, Kim Delhorst. **Live:** Barley Wik, Daniel Lanois, David Francey.

Lillian Wauthier. Presenter, Acoustic Harvest Folk Club, Scarborough. Fred Eaglesmith, *Bailin'* (AML); Rick Fines, *Riley Wants His Life Back* (Independent); Jason Fowler, *Temporary Grounds* (Independent); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Independent); Bill Garrett & Sue Lothrop, *Red Shoes* (Borealis); Eve Goldberg, *Crossing the Water* (Borealis); Le Vent du Nord, *Maudite Moison!* (Borealis); Arnie Naiman, Brian Taheny, Chris Coole, Chris Quinn, *The Banjo Special* (Merriweather); Pierre Schryer, *Blue Drag* (New Canadian); Tanglefoot, *Captured Alive* (Borealis).

New Discoveries: Rick Speyer, Jimmy Bowskill, Cheryl Neill. **Live:** The Marc Atkinson Trio, Trevor Mills, Tim O'Brien.

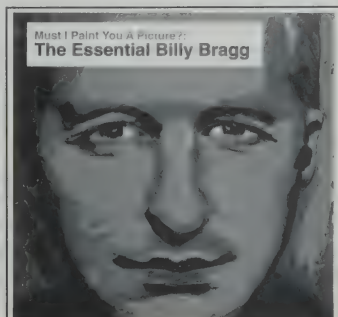
Chris White. Artistic Director, Ottawa Folk Festival. Arrogant Worms, *Semi-Conducted* (Arrogant Worms); Karan Casey, *Distant Shore* (Shanachie); Fred Eaglesmith, *Bailin'* (AML); Joël Fafard, *Rocking Horse* (Bayard Island Music); Grievous Angels, *Hanging Songs* (Jimmy Boyle); Josée Lajoie, *Man Zou* (Independent); Le Vent du Nord, *Maudite Moison!* (Borealis); Mighty Popo, *Ngagara* (CBC); The McDades, *For Reel* (Free Radio). **New Discoveries:** Kate Maki, Shauntay Grant, Zachary Stevenson. **Live:** Gordon Stobbe, Jane Siberry, Ron Sexsmith.

Terry Wickham. Artistic Director, The Edmonton and Calgary Folk Music Festivals. Blackie & the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); David Francey, *Skating Rink* (Festival); Le Vent du Nord, *Maudite Moison!* (Borealis); Oysterband, *Rise Above* (True North); Robert Randolph & The Family Band, *Unclassified* (Warner); Martin Simpson, *Righteous & Humidity* (Topic); Oh Susanna, *Oh Susanna* (Nettwerk); Chip Taylor & Carrie Rodriguez, *The Trouble with Humans* (Train Wreck); Dar Williams, *The Beauty of Rain* (Razor & Tie); Nathan Wiley, *Bottom Dollar* (Sonic). **New Discoveries:** Robert Randolph, Tachael Davis, Buck 65. **Live:** Ricky Skaggs, Capercaillie, Bob Geldof.

Michael "A Man Called" Wrycraft. Artist, Juno Award-winning CD Sleeve designer. Geoff Berner, *We Shall Not Flag or Fail...* (Black Hen); Arlene Bishop, *Cut A Man's Heart Out* (12 Steves); Blackie & the Rodeo Kings, *BARK* (True North); Kevin Breit & Folk Alarm, *Skedaddle* (Poverty Playlist); David Byrne, *Lead Us Not Into Temptation* (Soundtrack for Young Adam); Bill Frisell, *The Willies* (Nonesuch); Al Green, *I Can't Stop* (Blue Note); Craig Northey, *Giddyup*, (Independent); Harry Manx & Kevin Breit, *Jubilee* (NorthernBlues); **New Discoveries:** Geoff Berner, Kyle Riabko, Justin Rutledge. **Live:** Kris Demeanor, Harrison Kennedy, Kyle Riabko.

63
PENGUIN
EGGS
Winter
2004

Awards Poll



Dave Clarke Review

I am writing to express my disappointment in the musical review by Jay Knutson of *Guitar Songs* by Dave Clarke. I should have suspected a careless review when I noticed that the artist's name was misspelled. While the reviewer acknowledged Mr. Clarke's musical expertise and impressive musical associations with David Francey and Steel Rail, his dismissal of the music as "easy listening" and "predictable" was an unfair slam.

Mr. Clarke's compositions of simplicity and purity are a welcome respite from the many gimmicky acoustic fare on the market today. If the reviewer had read the composer's liners for each of the songs, he would have understood the mood defined in each piece. Similar to Mr. Francey, Mr. Clarke evokes musical landscapes of his experiences. That the music is a pleasant and a calming influence, is to Mr. Clarke's credit. As he explained for the song *Close Your Eyes*: "Adults need lullabies, too".

Mr. Knutson missed the mark on this one. Fortunately, reviewers in such respected publications as *Sing Out!* have justly recognized the excellence of this recording.

Sincerely, Marguerite Schellentrager
Bellevue, Washington

Greg Brown Retrospective

I agree with the points Les Siemieniuk makes in his review of Greg Brown, *If I Had Known, Essential Recordings 1980-1996* and would like to expand on "greatest hits packages...serve some purpose." As someone who came to Brown's music late, this package does help fill in the gap in my shelf between *The Iowa Waltz* and *The Poet Game*. Sometimes it takes a while to track down all the albums, not to mention being able to afford them all at once. Also, for someone like myself who is constantly encouraging friends to give my favorites a listen, this a great introduction to his music.

What really drives me crazy is when an album gets reissued, or a *Best of* includes new material, like happened with Lucinda Williams and Ian Tyson, respectively. Where does that leave people who already have what we thought were complete collections? At least this collection is what it purports to be.

Lastly, I very much enjoyed the DVD, *Hacklebarney Tunes*, that came with this package. I've never seen Greg Brown in concert and this will have to do until the chance comes along. Or until I go out and buy *Live at the Black Sheep*.

Keep Penguin Eggs coming.
Monica Jones
Vancouver

Editorial I

Re: Editorial criticism of OCFY Youth Showcase
Allow me to clarify the purpose and methods of the Youth Showcase.

Member festivals were approached to sponsor a youth performer for the showcase in Sudbury. They could choose any act under 20 years of age and the idea was to reflect whatever is happening with the youth portions of all the festivals. We accepted everyone sponsored and gave the participants a 50% registration that allowed them to access all the resources presented at the conference.

OCFF welcomes all styles of music from any of our member festivals. I found the showcase entertaining and instructive. We have received massive positive support from audience members and many heartfelt letters from the participants.

The Youth Showcase is a work in process and will be expanded and augmented in 2004.

Doug McArthur
Board Member
Ontario Council of Folk Festivals

Editorial II

Re: The editorial about Youth Showcases at the OCFY Conference:

Some very interesting things evolved from those showcases, (and I'll say nothing here about the very positive feedback that we got from the participating musicians). Specifically, Donna Woldanski from Algoma University in Sault Ste Marie was so impressed by the conference that she immediately hired Michael Wrycraft and Dana Vizou to come to Algoma U for the Summer School of the Arts Program.

Then, Donna got together with Robin MacIntyre (OCFF Board member and director of SSM's Black Fly Jam concert series) and designed a \$1,000 bursary, funded by Algoma U for at least the next 3 years, to support OCFY youth initiatives. We're planning to expand our youth outreach beyond the showcases at this year's conference, although details are still in the formative stage. The aim is to bring in more youth to our organization, and then provide them with more resources to develop their careers. Some of these youth will no doubt be performers who may want to showcase, but we're also looking for young people with career aspirations in management, graphic design, media, journalism, education - any of the many fields that connect with the music business.

On another OCFY front, Galaxie has doubled their support of the Songs From the Heart contest so that we can offer a Rising Star Award to a francophone writer as well as our original Rising Star Award. The OCFY itself has also anted up some money to sponsor smaller cash prizes for Instrumental, Humour, Political, Childrens, and World Music songs.

And Penguin Eggs' offer of gift subscriptions prompted the Ottawa Folklore Centre to kick in a couple of gift certificates, so we'll have lots more to give away this year. All Ontario writers are welcome to peruse the OCFY website (www.ocff.ca) for details.

Cheers, Alex Sinclair

Continued from page 37

Philippe: "They're not weird to me. I think they mean weird compared to North American pop music in general. [My lyrics] are different because of who I am. I use the language differently. I grew up in Northern Ontario and went to a French speaking school there. I've lived in Quebec for most of my life at this point. That's part of me. I was born in Switzerland and that's also part of me, French-Swiss. So I'm a lot of things and that makes me different. It's not anything special; it's just the way it is."

The slightly uneven *Love Over And Over* came out in 1983. It was their last album for seven years. In the meantime, they raised children, bought synthesizers and started to write "kind of like Debby Harry."

Not surprisingly then, that *Heartbeats Accelerating*, had more of a contemporary edge. Produced by Daniel Lanois' pal, Pierre Marchand, it featured top-drawer songwriting, superbly inventive arrangements but paradoxically remains totally underrated. Marchand went on to work with Sara McLachlan and Kate and Anna took another extended recording hiatus.

Matapedia (1996) and *The McGarrigle Hour* (2000) saw them return fully rejuvenated and again clawing at banjos and stretching button accordions. The latter in particular, revisited numerous traditional songs and old family favourites with sisters, daughters, sons, past and present husbands, and friends like Linda Ronstadt and Emmylou Harris. Harris had recorded Kate, Anna and Jane's *Love Is* on her 1989 album, *Bluebird*. But more spectacularly, she had put Kate and Anna's *Goin' Back To Harlan* on her Grammy Award-winning, Daniel Lanois produced, *Wrecking Ball*. *The McGarrigle Hour* also saw Kate and Anna reunited with Joe Boyd.

"He's not that musical. He doesn't play an instrument. So in a way, he has really fresh ears," says Kate. "It's amazing. I don't know what he sees or hears in something that makes him like it but every once in a while he'll hit upon something and go, 'You know, let's keep that alive. He has that great credibility.'"

Both Kate and Anna's sons and daughters are now adults and contributed to *The McGarrigle Hour*. Still, Anna's Sylvan and Lily appear more reluctant to take up a career in music. "I doubt my son will ever make a record. I don't think he's inclined that way," says Anna. "He's musical but he doesn't want to sing on stage. My daughter sings. She has a very nice voice and she plays guitar but she hasn't written anything yet. That's something on the back burner for her."

Kate's Rufus and Martha Wainwright have, of course, both recorded acclaimed albums of their own. "I'm so proud. I'm so happy for them," says Kate. "Rufus was going to be a musician no matter what. He really didn't have any interest in doing anything else. But they both worked very, very hard."

And what advice did you give them?

"Be original!"

Ah yes, just like their mum and aunt.



Rape Of Grand Pré

Music Traditional
Lyrics By Rob Currie

65
PENGUIN
EGGS
Spring
2004

En dix-sept cin-quant-e-cinq, the year they tore
us from the land. L'Acadie had fall-en un-
der Win-slow's bloo-dy hand. Be-cause we would not swear a -
lle-giance to le roi des-An-g-lais. Our
dikes were cruel-ly rent our peo-ple dri-ven from Grand Pré

En dix-sept cinquante-cinq, the year they tore us from the land
L'Acadie had fallen under Winslow's bloody hand
Because we would not swear allegiance to le roi des Anglais
Our dikes were cruelly rent, our people driven from Grand Pré

In L'église St-Charles-des-Mines, our men and boys were held for days
Their names were taken down, their deportation orders made
Black was the ink beneath the pen that wrote our lives away
And blacker still the souls of those who took us from Grand Pré

Her cottage confiscated, one old woman stood alone
She threw herself across the threshold of her only home
She cried aloud, "Ah, Jésus Christ! Il a nous abandonne,"
I heard her weeping softly as they led her from Grand Pré

Our people spread out far and wide, like seeds upon the wind
Striving for safe haven and a better life to win
So many sailed south, at many harbours turned away
A new life en Louisiane, still haunted by Grand Pré

Our story is a living one, the truth upon us sealed
Like children torn from mothers' arms, the wound shall never heal
Though a hundred generations pass, may we still recall the day
Our fire flickered briefly and then faded from Grand Pré

Penguin Eggs is determined to cultivate and strengthen a national interest in folk and roots music by printing score sheets to exemplary character contemporary songs the editor considers written in a traditional style. Rob Currie's *Rape of Grand Pré* falls into that category for two reasons. One, it's a damn fine song. And two, he uses the beautiful tune from the traditional Irish song Skibereen for the melody. Thus the folk tradition continues to evolve. *Rape of Grand Pré* can be found on his very impressive solo debut disc, *This Gentlest Country*. Rob very kindly allowed us to reprint it here. Much thanks to John Minter for transcribing the notes and words. Now go and learn it – instruments are optional

Charts

Get cracking!

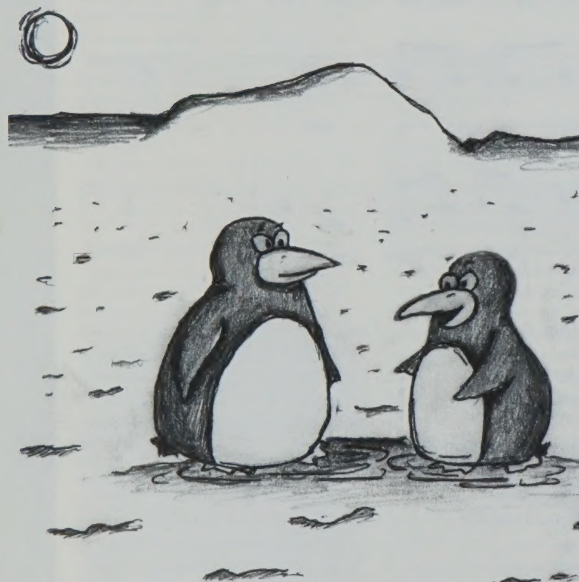
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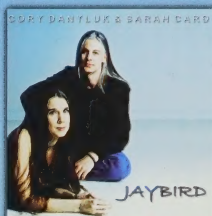
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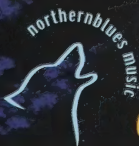
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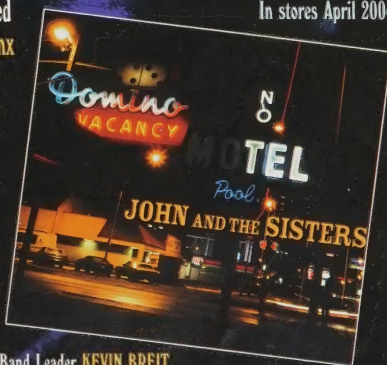
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